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BENEATH AFRICAN GLACIERS





MOUNT KILIMANJARO

Frontispiece]

BENEATH AFRICAN GLACIERS

*THE HUMOURS, TRAGEDIES AND DEMANDS OF
AN EAST AFRICAN GOVERNMENT STATION
AS EXPERIENCED BY AN OFFICIAL'S WIFE :
WITH SOME PERSONAL VIEWS ON NATIVE
LIFE AND CUSTOMS*

By
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WITH FIFTY-ONE PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
H. F. & G. WITHERBY
326 HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

1924

(Printed in Great Britain)

TO
MY HUSBAND

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FOREWORD

BELIEVING that many who have never visited the Dark Continent may find some interest in the life of those European exiles who have tasted the bitter and the sweet of tropical Africa, and who are quietly "carrying on" in remote corners of the Empire, I have set down my experiences as an official's wife in a small community on the slopes of an extinct volcano some three degrees south of the Equator and two hundred and fifty miles inland from the East African coast.

If the happenings in this tiny settlement of nine to fifteen white men and women (the number varying with the ability of the six to escape temporarily) lack the colour and tradition of older outposts of the Empire, I hope the reader may find some compensating interest in the realm of black Africanism which contributed to the zest of our life with its quaint customs and practices.

I have endeavoured to set forth the difficulties and delights of creating something from nothing in a country as bare of luxuries as Mother Hubbard's cupboard, and to make the reader see with our eyes the beauty and mystery of Africa's moonlit nights, the soft gloom of her sodden forests, the merciless glory of her sapphire skies, the pulsing life of her native peoples and the part played therein by the servants of the Empire.

Some attempt has also been made to explain such of the African beliefs and ceremonies as came

to my immediate notice, without touching the sacred soil of scientific research, with which I confess but casual acquaintance.

Much of history must be left unwritten, much of beauty unsung, for the riches of African civilisation and lore are guarded jealously by her native sons and daughters.

Such as I have I give you.

A. D.

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CHAPTER I

COAST GLIMPSES

The Voyage of Discovery in 1921—The Forerunners of the Modern Coast-Dwellers—Portuguese Conquest and Arab Settlement—Rival Flags of Britain and Germany—Mombasa the Gateway to Kenya—Street Scenes—Clove-scented Zanzibar—Dar-es-salaam, the Seat of Government and Social Rivalry

WHEN Fate and desire pointed to East Africa as the Mecca for realisation of hopes deferred and "wanderlust" satisfied, the writer confessed to a comfortable state of ignorance as to the complexities of life in that far-off colony.

The natural reticence of the Government official as regards his work, his associates and his field of labour left much to be desired in the way of husbandly enlightenment, but acted as a stimulant to feminine curiosity and a safeguard against premature enthusiasm.

Hence the outward journey was in itself a voyage of discovery, and held something of the delight one feels on opening a book which has long been kept out of reach on the topmost library shelf, awaiting one's years of discretion. One looked upon one's companions *de voyage* as the possessors of some weighty secret, the extracting of which became an obsession.

Within three days of leaving the dull grey harbour

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of Marseilles our fellow-passengers were being sifted into those new to Africa, and hence holding no golden key to one's desires, and those sallow, quiet servants of the Empire who could, if they would, reveal her innermost secrets.

Yet the growing friendships of a month's enforced proximity yielded only modest gleanings of knowledge, and the shores of the African continent were actually in sight before I had formed any concrete idea of so much as its physical characteristics. Indeed, quite a year had passed before these first vagrant impressions took form and substance, and from much reading, persistent questioning and gradual absorption into the life of the country, a definite picture was developed.

One began to see the coastal life as the *raison d'être* of that slow inward penetration of the vast lands beyond.

Familiarity with the unknown had bred contempt of its hazards, and year by year the shadow coverlet of Africa's great nursery had been rolled back from the coast, revealing her millions of dusky children at work and at play; not the savage horde imagination had painted, but a comparatively harmless and childlike race, willing to share its toys and give up vast uninhabited spaces of that play-room which was to become the breeding-ground of hope for more than one European nation.

Little known as the coast of East Africa was to Europeans until the latter half of the last century, it must have been familiar to the ancients long before the existence of the English as a nation.

Already in the dawn of history an Egyptian expedition sailed southward until they saw the sun in the north, and these hardy travellers must certainly have touched the shores of Eastern Africa.

At a later date Persian colonisation seems to have been active and prolonged, for they left not only substantial ruins, but distinct traces of language and physical characteristics which are most pronounced in the little town of Lamu, situated very close to the Equator. Here the fine features, the long hair of the women, and a clear bronze colour of the skin tell of an origin which cannot be African.

Evidence of Chinese influence is also not lacking ; indeed the Lamu dhow, *tepe*, as it is called, is considered to be identical with the old Chinese junk. Chinese coins are picked up on the shores, and Chinese porcelain is frequently found in odd hamlets and towns.

There may have been a long lull before the next non-African visitors were seen in this region. Then came the Portuguese, who, after rounding the Cape of Good Hope, established themselves firmly for a century or more on the seaboard of Eastern Africa. The hardihood of these mariners can scarcely be imagined. Travelling out as we do to-day in modern liners, importing every possible comfort, combating the evils of the tropics with the aids of modern science, overawing the native with weapons which the Portuguese would have regarded as superhuman, one can scarce understand how men had the fortitude to venture in 40-ton vessels a year's journey from their home to

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live in a climate for which they were ill-suited, to which they could in no way adapt themselves, and whose evil effects they had no means of resisting.

Yet the Portuguese settlement was real enough to establish one hundred and fifty churches along the coast and to introduce Christianity to an extent that has hardly been achieved at the present day.

An enduring monument to their enterprise may be seen at Mozambique, where the vast fortress that commands the creek was built by that nation, a formidable wall of solid stone, every bit of which was carried from Portugal.

In due course Portuguese dominion declined, and a new power appeared in East Africa.

Arabs had already travelled to the coast, and many, no doubt, settled there. With greater ability to support the climate, and with comparatively easy access from their own country, they increased in numbers and even gained the ascendancy.

Their contributions to East Africa were trade, slavery, the Islamic religion, and a certain admixture of Arabic to the coastal language—namely, Swahili.

At the present day every inland tribe is represented on the coast. The simple hinterland native quickly imbibes coastal practices and language, and is not content until he garbs and bears himself as a full-blooded Swahili. For the untrained eye it is therefore difficult to distinguish one from the other, and to all intents and purposes a Swahili is now simply a coast-dweller anywhere between

Mozambique and Kismayu. But the aristocracy of this vast coast land is the true Swahili, who prides himself not a little on his nationality and scornfully classifies the rest as "slaves."

Against these people the early Arab settlers could make little headway until a second and more definite Arab invasion took place towards the end of the eighteenth century.

There was, at that time, a very thriving kingdom in Muscat. A certain Imam of Muscat, who seems to have been rather wearied of state affairs, sought peace and repose on the Island of Zanzibar, where he established his Court, and periodically resided.

Now a descendant of his died on the way to the island *sans souci*, and his younger son seized the occasion to declare himself Sultan of Zanzibar and independent of Imam of Muscat.

Thereupon war arose, and, as can be imagined, serious warfare between Muscat and Zanzibar was an undertaking fraught with difficulty. In due course there intervened a third Power, no less than Great Britain, which offered its services as mediator, with the result that Zanzibar became a tributary state of Muscat. But the tribute, 40,000 dollars per annum, was tardily paid, and eventually not paid at all, so once more war-clouds threatened on the horizon. Again Great Britain stepped in and magnanimously undertook to liquidate the debt if Muscat would desist from molesting Zanzibar.

Such was the beginning of British influence in Eastern Africa. Meanwhile the Sultan of Zanzibar had extended his rule to the coast, and in a vague

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way also to the interior, and was pleased to regard himself as monarch of Eastern Equatorial Africa.

Then came the period from 1880 to 1890, when still another Power sought to establish itself in this region. Germany, frantically looking about for unoccupied patches of the earth wherein to set up a colonial empire, made her appearance, quickly hoisted her flag here, there and everywhere, supporting her claims by so many scraps of paper in the way of formal "treaties" with the mainland native chiefs, who, needless to say, could neither read, write nor comprehend a document of any sort.

But if there was any European Power who had acquired the right to dominion in East Africa it was Great Britain, who had been intimately concerned in affairs here. She had established the Sultan on his throne, she had taken him under her wing, and not only had she put down slave-trading, but she had induced the Sultan to co-operate in this aim.

Great Britain therefore entered the ring, and the upshot was an international conference which determined the respective spheres of the two European Powers.

A feeble protest came from the Sultan, who claimed that, as a matter of fact, all this territory belonged to himself. But the shadowy character of his rule in the interior was not accepted as actual sovereignty, and his dominions were limited to the Island of Zanzibar and a coast strip of ten miles in depth.



(Upper) CORAL ROCKS NEAR MOMBASA

(Lower) OLD PORTUGUESE FORT, MOMBASA

[To face p. 16

Subsequently the Germans purchased the coast strip on their side of the new boundary. On the British side it remains to this day as part of the Sultan's territory, and his flag is the only one permitted to be flown from the ground.

Thirty years passed and then came the war ending in the conquest of German East Africa, which, under the name "Tanganyika Territory," was entrusted to British rule under a mandate of the League of Nations.

Such in brief is the history of Equatorial East Africa and of its acquisition by Great Britain.

Bordering as it does the Central African territories of British Uganda and British Nyassaland, it constitutes part of an appreciable section of the British Empire. Whatever riches the vast interior may disgorge now, or in the future, the coast will remain all-important as feeder and outlet.

In a political sense, also, it is of paramount importance, for here are our most advanced Africans to be found, here foreign influence makes itself most felt, and from here the interior is influenced to the greatest extent. Undoubtedly dominant in this respect is the town of Mombasa, situated on an island midway between the southern and northern boundaries of the British coast zone.

An island separated from the mainland by barely half-a-mile of sheltered water must always have been easy of access, and at the same time easy to defend, wherefore it was probably at all times coveted, and consequently the object of many attacks and vicissitudes of war—hence perhaps its original Swahili name, "Vita," meaning war. The

name "Mombasa" is derived from Mombas, the first Portuguese governor.

Ruins of the ancient town "Vita" are well preserved and have afforded some fine relics in carved tombstones and inscriptions.

The Portuguese have left a substantial memorial in the great fort on the seaside, which still bears the engraved arms of several of their governors. Here a Portuguese garrison held out for no less than thirty-nine months against the hostile population. Cooped up in the tropical heat, starved, and diminished in numbers by malaria and plague, the defenders sought to curry favour by hoisting the flag of the Sultan of Witu, an island situated northwards of Lamu. One can imagine their rapture and relief when, at this stage of the siege, a Portuguese fleet hove in sight. But what must have been their dismay when very shortly the fleet stood out to sea again and abandoned them to their ghastly fate.

The fleet, seeing the strange flag over the fortress, had assumed that the fort had fallen, and their errand was therefore futile. This fort, which now serves as a prison, marks the boundary between the European and coloured quarters of the town. Beyond it, on the coral cliffs of the sea-front, squat little bungalows are dotted about, always placed with one object in view—namely, to catch the fresh sea breeze that fans the sultry coast. So efficacious is this ocean wind that whereas the immediate surroundings of the European settlement are as unhealthy as any part of East Africa, white people have lived for years in Mombasa without a trace of fever and with little suffering from the heat,

excepting in March, when the breeze dies away most inopportunately just in the hottest month.

On the outward voyage to Africa one had listened with bated breath to the tales of the old residents of the country—old in the sense of having been settled there some five to twenty years—young planters who had taken up land hundreds of miles from the coast, and later brought out their wives to a finished coffee plantation or cattle farm; officials who had grown thin and pasty-looking from long service in unhealthy districts, and the coast-dwellers, who had no interest in the country at the “back of beyond.” Each added his tale of hard-won success or sordid failure to prick the curiosity of the new-comer, but no one prepared the eager listener for the scarlet and white beauty of Mombasa.

A month of grey and tossing seas whets the appetite for a first glimpse of human habitation and the good green earth, and possibly deepens one's appreciation of all that Nature has to offer in the way of trees and flowers. Certainly no more grateful sight could fall upon ocean-weary eyes than the smiling, snug harbour of Mombasa, with her low shores, almost near enough to step upon as the ship dropped anchor. The white shell road, ending on the beach, beckoned alluringly, and one stepped from a little rowing-boat directly on to the soft turf, to be immediately surrounded by a babel of strange voices, and highest of all the clarion notes of the driver of a good old Ford car! What more could one desire to bring that sense of kinship with the whole world?

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A few steps beyond the heated foreshore one entered a charming, shady avenue lined with "flamboyant" trees, rioting in scarlet blossoms, and everywhere the snowy white or delicate coral-coloured buildings flashed in and out the foliage like the houses of a child's toy village.

On past neat little shops and fine office buildings whizzed the "Tin Lizzie," until the radiating narrow streets betokened the presence of new and unknown races, and one left the modern conveyance to explore afoot the native town and the more ancient parts given over to men and women of many nationalities.

The oldest quarter of the present town is that inhabited by the Indians and Arabs. Here narrow thread-like streets are lined with rows of Indian shops and Arab coffee-houses, and filled with a motley sauntering throng of men of all races. Baluchis, Arabs, Somalis, Goans and Europeans wander aimlessly up and down, singly or in twos and threes, while the up-country native African gazes wonderstruck at the array of gaudy cloths, beads, wire, knives and cheap Manchester products of every sort. The air is laden with the pungent smell of spices intermingled with less pleasing odours. The houses are high, narrow and jammed together, many with overhanging little balconies and shuttered windows to protect the feminine inmates from the vulgar gaze of passers-by. Here and there are scattered white mosques and Hindu temples, in which silent worshippers may be seen through the open arches as they reverently bend their heads to touch the dust.

Facing Mecca, whatever their situation in regard to neighbouring buildings, the mosques necessarily stand at all angles, and will always do so in sign that Islam knows no straight thoroughfare other than the roads that lead to the Holy City.

Beside the mosques are ancient wells where the worshippers draw water to cleanse their feet before entering the house of prayer. Wells are numerous throughout Mombasa, which, until recently, had no other water-supply.

From sunrise to sunset the town's people may be seen in picturesque groups around them, for the drawing of water is a task to be performed without unseemly haste, and affords pleasant opportunity for gossip with one's fellows. Stalwart Arabs of Shehir earn their living by drawing and carrying water to those who can afford to employ them, and their half-naked brown figures are never absent from the group around the well.

In neat lines the African huts, built of mud and thatched with palm leaf, adjoin the Arab and Indian quarter, presenting a model of cleanliness beside the squalid Indian slums. Between the brown huts the lofty coco-palms grow, regardless of line and order, and huge mango-trees afford the densest shade for idlers. Colour runs riot here, in nature and humanity. Black-skinned labourers mix with white-robed dandies, who roam about exchanging banter with dusky girls clothed in brilliant-hued cottons, often more picturesque by being half concealed in a floating square of black worn over the head and falling to the feet or

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draped with infinite variety to tease the eye with contrasting colours.

Here and there a grave Arab wanders with gay turban and silver-embroidered robe, or a Somali strides, his snow-white raiment setting off a scarlet tunic, and in the midst, erect and passive, the African "Bobby," trusty arm of the law, with truncheon and whistle complete, making a brave figure in his khaki and scarlet uniform.

Donkeys, goats, sheep and cattle jostle with the crowd, while here and there a supercilious camel lurches down the sandy road to the sea.

At the southern and opposite extremity of the island lies the principal harbour, Kilindini—the entry and exit of Kenya Colony and Uganda, and the starting-point of the Uganda railway, the most important artery of Eastern Africa.

As we sail out from the narrow neck of Kilindini harbour we pass close under the ancient fortress of the Portuguese, with its primitive rusty guns, now harmlessly covering the passing ships. On beyond, with beautiful greens rising from the sandy shore, is the golf club, and still farther a glimpse of the smaller northern harbour of Mombasa, filled with Arab dhows and clustering canoes, ancestors of our own modern liner.

The scene conveys an impression of contrasts—the primitive and advanced civilisation, the ancient and modern in human existence.

Beyond, over the hills which rise from the mainland shore, lies the high road into the heart of Africa, not so long since approached only on foot, but now traversed by rails penetrating to regions

in which modern farms, plantations, factories and mills contribute their quota to the world's supplies, and yet peopled with human beings more primitive than the ancient Britons of Cæsar's day, and whom we shall soon be greeting as friends.

Again it is the *contrast* of life in Africa that engages our interest and compels us to speculate no less on the unknown future than on the misty part of the Dark Continent.

Southward our course runs along the palm-dotted coral coast. For a time we may pick out snug little villages nestling in palm groves, inhabited by the toilers of the sea. Their canoes skim the ocean, minute vessels so narrow in build that but for their wide outrigging they could not venture out on a pond, yet capable of riding the waves even in the boisterous monsoon winds. Graceful dhows head bravely out to sea and, unguided by compass or chart, traverse the ocean to distant Muscat and remoter India, being carried only by the wind that blows unfailingly from north-east or south-west.

Here and there one of the Lamu type of dhows, the so-called *tepe*, may be seen. The long double-prowed line and the square matting sail give the vessel a striking resemblance to the ancient viking ships.

In these latitudes also the sea has exercised its traditional training on men. A hardier, finer class of natives than the sea-going Swahili is not to be found, and, like other sailors, religious spirit is strong in them. On the poop of the vessel your African skipper may often be heard sonorously

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repeating passages from the Koran, and the Book of the Prophet is always in his lap as he squats by the tiller, guiding his ship by the light of experience and the will of Allah.

No sooner do we lose sight of the mainland, on which lies pretty Tanga, a few hours below Mombasa (and which we will explore later), than we come in clear view of Zanzibar, island of delight, whose one city is looked on by all natives as the metropolis of Africa.

Zanzibar was known to Marco Polo, who called it "Zingisbar," but he had little to tell of the island, save that its women were the most hideous and wide-mouthed in the world—a slanderous statement, which the dusky ladies of Zanzibar may easily disprove.

For centuries Zanzibar constituted the capital of Eastern Africa, and down to a generation ago it was the capital of British East Africa. Since then the fair city has lost importance and has met with strong competition, both from Mombasa and Dar-es-salaam, yet it is still the collecting centre for trade, and in African estimation retains its place as the Paris of the East Coast.

The correct style, mode and habit for the native is that of Zanzibar, all other fashions are provincial. Particularly in the matter of feminine garb Zanzibar sets the seal of approval or disapproval.

Let it not be thought that the "fair" sex of Africa is indifferent to changing fashion! Oft-times it happens that the unfortunate Indian shop-keeper is left with bales of fine cloth on his hands because miladi knows they were worn last season in

Zanzibar and have been there supplanted by new designs and colourings of more recent date. Who the Paquin of Zanzibar is nobody knows, but whoever would traffic in ladies' attire must carefully watch her style and study her whims.

The town of Zanzibar was so advanced and set when it came under European control that its character could be little changed. Its streets are an endless tangle of narrow passages in the style of Mombasa, but more extensive and fortunately much cleaner, more savoury, and with an air of greater elegance and wealth. For Zanzibar is rich by comparison with other towns of East Africa. Not only is the transit trade of the port still extensive, but its own export of copra and cloves is considerable, and, besides revenues derived from trade, the island enjoys the somewhat anomalous income of rent from Kenya Colony for the mainland coast strip which is still a portion of the Sultan's domains.

By reason of its wealth Zanzibar is able to maintain a Government staff not altogether in proportion to its bare needs. One is amused to hear talk of a "General Manager" and assistant manager of railways on an island which boasts seven miles of steam tram line!

There is altogether something Gilbertian about Zanzibar, whereto perhaps the presence of its Sultan contributes not a little. His Highness creates the charming atmosphere of an Eastern potentate with true simplicity and originality. In his name the British Government rules and issues decrees, his

banner is the flag of the country, and, beside the rent paid to the island in his name, his personal stipend constitutes a substantial item of the Zanzibar budget.

Yet, with that curious policy which Great Britain has so quietly and successfully maintained in Eastern lands, the Sultan is entirely dependent on us. Thus, when the last Sultan, a nephew of the present Sovereign, proved himself an unreliable spendthrift, who dissipated most of his time and fortune in Paris, he was "persuaded" to abdicate in favour of his uncle.

On this tropical island lives a happy colony of Britishers. The "Zanzibar-barians," as they have been called, are a contented lot, living as one should live in these parts. Here is no undue haste or exertion. Your official and trader considers his polo and tennis and also his club attendance quite as essential as his commercial or official duties, and who shall say that it is not so? One must seek to make life bearable where it would otherwise be intolerable, and guided by this spirit Zanzibar works and plays smoothly and happily on.

Alas! it has been discovered that Zanzibar has money to spend, and wise heads have found a way of using the surplus of her budget.

The town is too "congested" for sanitary experts, so her delicious crooked streets must be widened to admit air and light. It may be wisdom, but those who know the old Zanzibar will ever regret not merely the shade of its twisted passages, but the quaint old-world Eastern atmosphere that distinguished the town from such monstrosities as

Nairobi and the unlovely tin hamlets that shout of European creation.

Dominating the flat-roofed houses, and even the minarets of its scores of mosques, stands the modern palace of the Sultan now converted into Government offices. Inside and outside its massive doors are richly carved in the Arab style frequently found in doorways of Arab towns. The exteriors are always plain, square and severe ; the interiors are wide-arched and airy, constructed with the sole object of excluding heat and tropical glare. Indeed no man has designed houses more suited to the climate than has the Arab. The most comfortable houses in Zanzibar are still those built in pre-European days and such as have imitated their style, and Zanzibar has carefully avoided the orthodox "bungalow" of most British colonial towns.

Close to the palace is the old fort of the Sultans, now more or less of a ruin. Some thirty years ago it was battered to pieces when the Sultan defied the British Navy with his mediæval cannon, and a decaying hulk on the sandbank is all that remains of his ship-of-war which he sent out to challenge Her Majesty's ironclads. We may take a ride in the Zanzibar "Express" to its terminus, which revels in the Gilbertian name of "Booh, Booh, Booh," or we may take a ride to Chuaki on the eastern side of the island, where the Indian Ocean laps its shores and carries fresher breezes than the western side can enjoy.

The chief object of interest on such a trip will be the clove groves of the island.

Introduced by the Arabs, the clove has thrived in Zanzibar as it has nowhere else, and Zanzibar now produces practically all the clove supply of the world.

The clove here is a tall, conical growth of beautiful shape, and a grove is particularly attractive when thronged with merry pickers in the harvest season. Originally the plantations were worked entirely by slaves, and now that paid labour has to be employed, clove-growing is not so lucrative, but the industry constitutes the chief agricultural activity of the island.

North of Zanzibar lies its island adjunct, Pemba. Concerning this island one remarkable survival of Portuguese times is worthy of mention. The inhabitants here indulge to this day in bull-fights, in which every detail is said to correspond to the Portuguese model, excepting that the performance is devoid of brutality, for the bull is never harmed, but merely teased. Nor are men or horses gored and left bleeding or dead on the ground as in the Portuguese "festival" of horrors.

If we sail southwards still, our next call will be at Dar-es-salaam, the capital of German East Africa, or Tanganyika Territory as it is now called. Seeing that Dar-es-salaam has a harbour second only to that of Mombasa in its natural excellence, it is not at all apparent why it was not used from early times. The town of Bagamoyo, forty miles north, was a busy port since days of old, although it has no sheltering harbour. Probably Bagamoyo, like Sadani and Pangani, still farther north, gave easier access to the interior—in fact they were



(Upper) A PALM GROVE, DAR-ES-SALAAM

(Lower) OFFICES AND RESIDENCE OF SENIOR COMMISSIONER, DAR-ES-SALAAM

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notable starting and returning points for the great caravans in days when railways were unknown, besides being close to Zanzibar, to which place every traveller to the interior repaired in the first place to organise his undertaking, and secure letters of recommendation from the Sultan to various inland chiefs.

The name "Bagamoyo," meaning "peace of heart," indicates that the weary travellers returned rejoicing for their deliverance from the hardships and perils of the interior. Even the chained gang of slaves that was dragged to Bagamoyo must have felt relief in being brought to a spot where the hundreds of miles of burning sun, starvation and thirst ended in rest and plenty. Whatever may be the reason for the tardy development of its harbour facilities, Dar-es-salaam was practically non-existent until after 1850, when a Sultan of Zanzibar built himself a home there for retreat and rest and named it "Place of Safety." This house, now used as a gaol, is the only building not entirely new, and all the rest have sprung into existence since German rule was established. Dar-es-salaam, with its modern "flats" and bungalows, is therefore utterly different from other coast towns and historically less interesting, so that one has to console oneself with the reflection that it is more up to date and sanitary. The thoroughly German little city, which until then rejoiced in its Casino and *Biergarten*, saw evil days when British warships hovered about the coast and aeroplanes flew overhead. Not infrequently the inhabitants were forced to take to dug-outs, which offered no pleasing

refuge in such a climate; and when at last the British flag was hoisted over the town, even the German civilians hardly concealed their satisfaction. Yet the damage done was inconsiderable, amounting to little more than the destruction of the Imperial Governor's Palace, which has since been reconstructed on a scale which puts its forerunner quite in the shade.

Dar-es-salaam has recovered its equanimity more quickly than many other parts of the war-battered world, and is now gay with entertainment and the golf, tennis and other pastimes that inevitably follow in the wake of British colonisation. It is perhaps chiefly interesting as the "Court" where visitors from up-country pay their respects to the Governor in travelling into or out of the territory, but it is not considered healthy. Mosquitoes and malaria are close companions here as elsewhere on the coast—its fine hospital is never empty. Its attractions are only such as are created through the ingenuity and rivalry of its various hostesses, yet English men and women make it their home, and with admirable courage extract every possible diversion from its tropical atmosphere, and strive against the temptation to inertia that besets all coast-dwellers.

CHAPTER II

TANGA: THE GATEWAY OF "GERMAN" EAST AFRICA

The Family Cat *versus* the Customs Official—First Impressions—Tanga's Part in the War—Exploring the "Spotless Town" of the Tropics—The *Boma*—Laundering the Official—The Bazaar—Harbour Drive—Native Dance by Moonlight—Native Music—By *Garri* to the Country Club—Social Life—Farewell to the Coast

As Tanga was our port of entry into the mandated colony of Tanganyika (once the prized offspring of the "Fatherland") it naturally assumed an overwhelming importance as compared with other coast towns, and will ever retain its charm for the writer as the hospitably opened door of that country one now calls "Home."

Our arrival in Tanga was marked by a serio-comic event of some importance, for it was here that little puss, who had travelled half-way round the world in order to meet her first wild-cat in its natural habitat, was in danger of instant deportation, or, worse still, immediate destruction by an unsympathetic Customs official.

Guided by advance information of the "Man from Cook's," the family kitten had been embarked at Tilbury, proudly carrying her £4 steamship ticket (cat-class), attached by fluttering blue ribbons to her furry neck, with no fears as to the admissibility of felines into Africa.

A rude awakening awaited her fond foster-parents when the grim-visaged Tanga Chief of

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Customs, on being invited as a treat to look in pussy's basket, proclaimed her contraband goods, and subject to confiscation.

As the little tortoise-shell cat had accompanied her mistress on many long journeys, and had crossed the Atlantic and Indian Oceans in order to share our new life, we were averse to losing her now. Having survived a month of "stuffing" by an over-zealous ship's cook, it seemed too cruel that just as she had crossed the threshold of a new country offering such a variety of *hors d'œuvres* pleasing to the jaded appetite, she should be threatened with immediate extinction.

One confesses to shedding feminine tears at this juncture, as so many things were new and strange that the little cat seemed to be the last link with that old sweet life and its familiar surroundings. The understanding master of the household here dealt with the matter effectively, and generously endangering his reputation as an official of stern principles, dispatched this meek telegram to the Governor of the colony: "May I import one kitten?"

This cryptic wire afforded much amusement at headquarters, as it struck an entirely new note in official messages, and belied the accredited ferocity of the senior commissioner who bravely signed it.

However, pussy's release was eventually secured, and with a numerous offspring of somewhat doubtful lineage she still finds enjoyment in searching for and consuming the delicacies of African insect life.

Tanga, seen from the sea, is but a low, palm-

fringed, glistening line against the horizon, which rather disappoints the eager watcher at the ship's rail, until suddenly the coral reefs are rounded, and one enters a fairy-like island-dotted harbour, with green hills rising gently in the distance, and glimpses the Arab-looking white buildings dotting the palm groves along the shore.

The innocent-looking little harbour is a dangerous one for the "ocean greyhound" to traverse, as its hidden reefs, with myriads of shark-like teeth, may cause infinite damage to unsuspecting hulls, so the journey shoreward is made in one of the small row-boats which cluster about the ships' anchorage.

Tanga, in the days of German occupation, must have been the cheery little "Spotless Town" of the tropics. So it still is, if one closes one's eyes to bomb-shattered buildings on the water-front, to the pock-marked and deeply rutted macadam roadways, to the silent and deserted bandstand in the centre of the square, where once re-echoed the stirring strains of the *Wacht am Rhein*.

The Tanga of to-day is still white, in spots, and is slowly recovering from her war wounds, for this little coast town, of some four hundred white inhabitants, played an important rôle in the East African operations of 1914, and a brief word in her honour may not be remiss after a lapse of eight years.

Our forces hastily sent to the African coast on the declaration of war in August 1914 were vastly superior to those of the German colonists, but a superficial knowledge of the character and determination of the latter, a general and erroneous

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belief on the part of our commanders that Tanga could be taken without fighting, led to the most disastrous holocaust of the entire African campaign.

After landing some 4000 British and Indian troops, under cover of naval guns from at least two warships, the three days of street-fighting in October 1914 resulted in a casualty roll of over 1200 of our men, a loss of 8 machine-guns, 600 rifles, vast supplies of food, rum, tinned milk, and a whole lighter of ammunition, which, in the general excitement of flight, was evidently forgotten.

The German troops could not have numbered more than 1000, and, judging from correspondence brought to light later, had little hope of retaining this important coast town, with its fair harbour and direct rail communication to the interior.

Had we remained in possession of Tanga, and thereby impressed upon the German defence force our firm intention to hold the ports of entry and ultimately occupy the country, the subsequent campaign would have been far different, and possibly would have ended quickly in our favour. For the Germans were but trying their strength, knowing themselves far outnumbered and dependent on native troops, who would have been greatly influenced by a British victory at the very outset of the campaign.

As it was, our ignominious flight, leaving behind more killed and wounded than were numbered in the entire German force, and quantities of much-needed supplies and ammunition, gave the enemy the encouragement needed for a long campaign,

and filled the native *askari* (soldier) with a contempt for our troops and generalship which aided greatly in building up a large and effective native defence force for the Germans.

After our vanquished hosts had made a sad and sorry entry into the haven of Mombasa Tanga ceased to be of interest for the time being, and operations were begun elsewhere, attended, however, with unimportant results so far as gaining immediate control of German East Africa was concerned. The task which at first had seemed child's play eventually resolved itself into a four years' struggle against hostile forces for whom the bush country held little terror and whose disdain of physical discomfort gained them every advantage over our troops, disheartened by initial repulses and suffering from every disease known to the tropics.

When Tanga was next occupied by the British, the taking over was a poor affair, as, after two years of somewhat misdirected effort, our troops were in control of practically the whole coast area, and Tanga was virtually evacuated at our approach.

After the first attempt in 1914 to storm the little city she was left undisturbed, and so has retained much unspoiled beauty; but there is a brooding sadness on her face, a restless sighing in her tree-tops, that to the sensitive eye and ear spells longing for her vanished yesterdays.

She was not built for us, pretty Tanga; our sober English mien, our quiet voices, our stolid adherence in alien places to our traditional British conduct—all these she does not understand, and

one feels the protest in her silent streets and neglected ruins.

The once glorious "Kaiser Hof," with its pillared verandahs, sets forth grudgingly its poor fare on the lonely table which now suffices for the occasional guest. The Spanish name of *mein host* does not wholly disguise his lingering alien sympathies, or those of his frankly German spouse, and the traveller dependent on their negligible hospitality must put up with unyielding beds and meals savouring of the purlieu of Hamburg. The views from the upper balconies overlooking the little town offer some compensation for physical discomfort within, for Tanga streets are delightfully shaded, and the blending of snowy white stucco with luxurious green foliage affords grateful relief from the glare of tropical sunshine.

Everywhere in Africa one marvels at the magic growth which springs from the soil once it is cleared of bush. It is difficult to believe that the giant trees, which almost exclude the blue skies above Tanga, were mere seedlings some twenty years ago, and that the pleasant green turf beneath was reclaimed from the sodden surface of a tangled mangrove swamp.

The desire to explore the attractive streets leading away from the garlicky odours of our chosen hostelry was not unmingled with a purely feminine eagerness to view an "official" home, and more particularly that of the chief administrative officer-in-charge of Tanga district.

To the oft-repeated wifely query, "What will *our* home be like?" somewhat vague replies had

been received, but one knew that Tanga Government officials enjoyed a luxury of life unknown to the up-country dweller, and that to evince enthusiasm for such comforts as exist only at the coast would be disloyal to that home which was waiting for us somewhere at the end of the ribbonny railroad.

We set out (with ill-disguised impatience on the part of one) for the dwelling-place of the officer-in-charge, where I was to receive my first lesson in official hospitality ; and here let it be said that no better schooling could be desired than the impression of that first call on the genial brother official and his warm-hearted little wife—the occupants of Tanga's *boma* in 1921-1923.

Throughout "German East" the *boma*, or residence of the chief official of each district, usually serves the combined purposes of living and defence. Many of these *bomas* were virtually forts, with civil and military officers' quarters above and stores for ammunition below, while the minor officials were scattered about in the wings of the building and the compound, and often the whole enclosed in stone fortifications.

Tanga's *boma* lacks this hostile appearance, and, standing some fifty feet above the sea, at the end of a long shaded avenue, has great charm and dignity. The offices are below, to be sure, but the upper storey and delightful Arab "look-out" chamber afford such self-contained living quarters that one is unaware of the buzzing of official business below.

Things do not "buzz" very much in Africa

anyway. To picture the modern commercial traveller attempting to do business in Central Africa in the accredited ways of the land of "hustlers" is to conjure a vision of the impossible. How sorry he would be for himself in a week, and how weary would be the smart "Panama" suits with which he had provided himself! To be bathed in tropical heat from nine in the morning till five at night has much the same effect as a day in the surf, except that one's tropical bath has none of the exhilarating qualities of the Atlantic.

"Summer time" on the coast means changing sodden garments half-way through the day to fresh ones, which, in turn, are quickly drenched with perspiration, and one must have countless baths and countless white suits to appear fresh even occasionally.

Tanga once boasted a public laundry to assist in the spotlessness of the high-collared German official, but this luxury is no more, and one or two of the ubiquitous house-boys are usually engaged in *dhobying* (washing) for the family several hours daily. All this necessary change of clothing in a coast town adds to the general appearance of freshness in the streets occupied by Europeans, and the proverbial filth which clothes the low-caste Indian, and is an accepted part of his surroundings, lends a certain picturesque contrast to the bazaar, which, in Tanga, lies directly behind its dignified main avenue, the "Kaiser Strasse" of German days.

The bazaar is a long street intersected by shorter ones leading to the native town, and in

its lop-sided, tin-roofed and mud-walled shops, with its heaped-up odds and ends outside, one searches in vain for *articles de vertu*.

Legless chairs, jugs without handles, dilapidated wicker furniture, pots and pans both battered and new, all the domestic paraphernalia of an evacuated town, add zest to the uneventful leisure hours of the native, who never fails to find something of interest and utility in the debris, and many a hard-earned rupee warms the palm of the grasping Indian who hovers above his worthless, though high-priced, stores.

A dented aluminium pot exercises on the African mind the same charm as a Ming bowl on the Chinaman ; from its shining recesses he dips his food with nature's chop-sticks, and when its surface has been duly polished with earth and loving hands, it answers for the family looking-glass. For the native is far from indifferent to his appearance, and there is studied art in the placing of a fine-tooth comb, which is well considered as a hair ornament stuck jauntily in the side of a woolly head.

On the other hand, the " Indian " of the bazaar is a lugubrious-looking person with spindle legs and woeful face ; he takes all his pleasure sadly, and a game of cricket as played between Indian teams is a funereal affair, most painful to the British onlooker.

Yet for all his appearance of dilapidation and poverty the Indian has succeeded in acquiring practically all the beautiful water-front adjoining Tanga. Set aside in the German time for European occupation, it has now, through public auction,

found no European purchasers, and the Indian, through the very liberal part-payment plan offered by the Mandatory Government, has been able to acquire this valuable property at a fraction of its value. He may never be able to occupy it, nor does he desire to do so, but he will hold it until it is required by the hoped-for incoming European, and then ask and receive pretty well what he chooses.

The boulevard skirting the pretty harbour is a fair prize to fall into such negligent hands. It affords delightful escape from the heat of summer afternoons, and the fashionable "flivvers" from Detroit (at present six in number) can easily negotiate the bumps and hurdles caused by eight years' necessary misuse and ill-repair.

Extensions through the deserted rubber plantations along the shore are possible, but as the properties have now been acquired by the Indian merchants, their European patrons may expect to be cut off from the entire harbour road in the near future.

The world has so many sad places in these days of acute remembrance, it seems a pity that little Tanga, the white gateway of a new country crying for development, should share the world-look of pain and semi-destruction.

Tanga was made for laughter, for boisterous song and clinking of glasses beneath her waving trees, for strutting officers surrounded by admiring *Mädchen*, for bustle and fluttering banners, for all the tinkling brass and cymbals that gave so merry a surface to the German colonial town.



(Upper) TANGA'S AFTERNOON BAND CONCERT
(Lower) TANGA HARBOUR

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Only in the native quarter does the spirit of high carnival still present itself, and here on a moonlit night one may see the world of black folks playing with an abandon which reckes not of Governmental changes or Mandatory policies.

It is content to lay its gift of song and dance at the feet of the giant palms which spread protecting arms above it and separate the kingdom of colour from that of the civilised white man. The African does not deify his tree as does the Nipponese, but his innate love of all that is beautiful is a protecting influence for the stately groves which shelter his hut, and form a perfect setting for the ceremonies and dances so dear to the native heart.

Here no jazz band or Free Church enthusiasm breaks discordantly upon the still air of a tropical starlit night. The first warning of a prospective *Ngoma*, or native celebration, greets the European ear as a soft thrumming of many muffled drums, seemingly far distant, and hardened indeed must be the individual who could hear this preliminary throbbing of music from the depths of the forest and not find himself hastening away from his dinner towards the native town.

As one crosses the bazaar, with its indifferent Indians seated about empty coffee-tables in the side-streets, and hurries on up the shaded sandy road, the low, throbbing note becomes more insistent, and is broken at intervals by seeming minor chords and single long-drawn notes of stringed instruments.

On entering the forest a wonderful sight presents itself. Countless smouldering camp-fires, on which

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the evening meal has been prepared, light up with fitful gleams the open spaces beneath the great palms, the dense shade above appears as the dome of a giant cathedral, beneath which are the glistening, swaying lines and circles of hundreds of half-naked bodies, linked arm-in-arm, and moving slowly to the rhythmic throbbing of the drums.

Now a voice takes up the minor note, repeats it and adds three lower ones. A chorus of mellow voices follows in unison with the bending, swaying bodies ; a slow foot movement, scarcely more than is caused by the bending of the knee, carries the long line forward an inch or two at a step.

Occasionally a new chanted phrase is introduced by a clear mellow voice, and this in turn is taken up by hundreds of the dancers in answering chorus, never raucous, never "out of tune," and never losing kinship with that bending, swaying motion of gleaming backs and shoulders.

Here and there three or four linked couples break from the circle and step within to start a new line of dancers, but the same rhythmic step bears them backward or forward beside their comrades.

Now a solo instrument is heard, and into the circle glides a handsome youth, touching lightly what first appears as a strung bow, but on close inspection proves to be an empty gourd fastened to a taut wire, which by delicate manipulation of deft fingers and a small stick gives forth a series of mellow notes not unlike those of a muted violin.

It is all so stately, so ceremonious, that one is inclined to believe it some manifestation of religious

zeal, a deification of a strange god whose spirit rules the soul of the black folk ; but no such reason is given by the real student of native life. There are, of course, many ceremonial dances celebrating various Pagan rites and customs, but as we shall speak later of these we leave our black fairyland of song and dance in Tanga, knowing it for what it is—the simple joy of living interpreted by a simple, happy people unconscious of its natural grace and beauty, and unobservant of the admiration it evokes from the European onlooker.

The Tanga native, however, is very proud of being such, as he thus is classed as a proper “Swahili,” a member of the most enlightened tribe of the Bantu race, and the language as spoken at the coast is perhaps the most musical and cultured of the many Bantu dialects.

Like all consciously superior beings without education, the Tanga native is inclined to rest on his acknowledged tribal superiority and is rather a thriftless fellow—fond of his pleasures, and more or less independent of work, as his wants are few and easily supplied. A bunch of green bananas plucked from his prolific roof-tree affords a feast when roasted in hot coals. Yams growing everywhere as tall as English hops in Kent provide another cheap delicacy when mixed with native rice, and without expending undue energy he may add the savoury envied by all up-country natives—fresh fish from the sea.

When a new shipment of goods arrives in the bazaar, and word goes abroad of its superior quality, there is a quickening desire for work, and

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under the stimulus of acquiring a new *kanzu* or *shuka* (a white cotton cloth worn like a Roman toga), applications of house-boys who have been "resting" pour into the offices of the *boma*. Only on these rare occasions when some personal issue is at stake can the coast native be induced to hurry, yet exception must be made in favour of the boys who propel the *garri*, the conveyance *par excellence* of Tanga and other coast towns possessing a light railway. In this capacity they are marvels of fleetness and sure-footedness.

An iron-wheeled "flat car" surmounted by a canopied *dos-à-dos*, pushed along its narrow-gauge rails by two running natives, can attain a speed which is well-nigh perilous, particularly if the runners of the preceding car have neglected to close a switch, of which there are many branching off the main line, the object of the principal artery being to serve the pretty Country Club, some two miles outside the town.

Tanga Country Club is a little oasis of loveliness in a desert of decaying swamps and deserted Sisal plantations, and another of the surprises of magic growth, for it did not exist in the German time.

When one reaches the end of the toy trolley line, after a twenty-minutes' "push" at lightning speed through palm groves, sandy waste and marsh, the green rolling hills, dotted with great shade trees, lie stretched before one like an English country-side.

A closer acquaintance with the greens, however, disproves the English likeness, for the wiry Uganda grass, the only plant which will cling to the loose,

sandy surface, lacks the springy quality of English turf; nevertheless the nine-hole course affords sufficient hazards to prove good sport. One cannot, at home, drive into a coconut-tree and lucklessly lodge one's ball on top of a huge nut, which gives up its prize only with the danger of a broken head in securing it.

A doll's house of a building is at present the gathering place of the Club members for tea, but in Africa, where the heat of the day makes out-of-door games impossible before four-thirty in the afternoon, and the twilight so suddenly blurs into night, with its attendant dangers, one does not loiter long at any great distance from home and safety. There is time for the first "sundowner," or evening drink, and then the golfers are speeded down the hill at breakneck pace by the running boys to the town Sports' Club, when second and sundry other "sundowners" await the thirsty, and where there are billiards, books and bridge to fill the hours before a late dinner.

There are some thirty Europeans in Tanga, excluding Greeks and the newly arriving Czecho-Slovakians (a citizenship which covers a multitude of questionable nationalities, and is a successful cloak for any former alien sympathies).

The snowy bungalows scattered about the palm groves are very attractive and cosy, and the wide verandahs afford ample dancing space. Indoor dancing is well-nigh impossible in the warm season of the tropics, when one makes but little use of a house save to sleep in it.

Occasional diversion also comes to Tanga in the

way of passing liners, whose twenty-four hours' stay in the harbour affords a dance on board and the greeting of old friends returning from "leave," or homeward bound from other stations in the colony: hence the coast seems to link one more closely with Home and the dear-remembered scenes and faces, and the months before one's own leave is due seem to be marked off the calendar more quickly with each arriving and departing steamer. To those who are new to the country they serve but as messengers to carry home the latest news of fresh delights and discoveries, unless they have joined the disgruntled few who have courted disappointment and found it, but we have naught to do with these; our way lies before us, the unopened book of inland Africa, and we close the white page of Tanga with a little sigh for her prettiness, her spotlessness, her sea breezes (and, to be honest, her Sunday morning breakfast of fish), and board the train which leads "into the blue," the land of tinned oysters, ptomaine and tantalising possibilities.

CHAPTER III

LIFE IN AN OUT-STATION

Travel in a Cinder Bath—The First Sunset—Night and the Bush Country—First Impressions of a Government Station—Home-making—Hospitality and its Exigencies—The Woman's Value and Sphere—Community Life—An Indian Tea-Party—The Household "Staff"—Reception by Natives—The Emergency Guest-House—Sport—Amusements and Obligations

THE making of a new home in a new country is not without its thrills for even the most blasé of women.

The rail trip from the coast to the interior of Tanganyika is a minor excitement in itself, albeit one awaits in vain the longed-for "hold-up" by stampeding wild elephants, or the unannounced advent of man-eating lions through the open window. Such stirring scenes have been enacted on East African railways within the memory of present settlers, but alas! these experiences were not for us in 1921.

The extremely primitive weekly "Express," the discard from some abandoned railway in Central India, makes a deceptively smooth exit from Tanga station, but with the first hint of increased grade its good behaviour ceases; the two dilapidated engines snort and jerk violently, as if wishing to shake off some section of the long and loosely linked tail which drags helplessly behind. One is fortunate if one's *vis-à-vis* is a cheerful relative, undisturbed by a sudden lapful of femininity hurled upon him. The iron dragons belch

fire with true Fafnerian vigour, and showers of red-hot embers pour in at the open windows, settling on the luckless traveller whose interest in the passing scenery outweighs his discretion.

These pampered and self-important little engines are fed with wood, and one has to endure not only the constant spark-dropping, but endless waits for fuel, which is piled up at the roadside and loaded into the tender by slow-moving natives. Often a quarter of an hour is consumed in whistling them out of their near-by huts. Meantime only quick action prevents the peppering of one's travelling gown into holes, if it is not actually in flames. Frantic search for safe cover proves fruitless, and one finally settles down nervously in the centre of the compartment and resigns oneself to the inevitable discomfort caused by the "Big Berthas" ahead.

Within two hours of Tanga the foothills of the Usambara highlands appear, and here one sees the first velvety folds and ridges which make the lower mountains of Africa seem less barren than the forestless heights of other countries.

With the approach of twilight the serrated peaks rise higher against the fast purpling sky; one thinks of Valhalla and almost expects to see the Valkyrie hosts float from some dark recess into the flaring afterglow of the sunset, which succeeds the darkening shadows for a brief moment and then quickly fades into night.

There are no half-tones in Africa to bridge her changes, the notes are sharply defined. The hot tropical day follows fast on the sunrise; the

evening shadows are hovering about before the sun has fairly set, and the black mantle of night is quickly silvered with countless stars, not arriving singly as in European countries, but appearing suddenly, as if a curtain had hastily been drawn from the face of the heavens, revealing the stage set for night.

Anyone who has lived in Africa knows how awesome are her hours of darkness ; a stillness of death pervades the sleeping world of humans, yet one is ever aware of the wild life which silently creeps from cover with the approach of night, and imagination peoples the thick bush with crouching lions and velvet-footed leopards, and every dancing firefly becomes a glowing eye set in the head of some savage beast.

Within the carriage *de luxe* reserved for our use on this first journey we were beset by countless mosquitoes if we ventured outside the protecting sleeping-nets, and from the leaky roof, during sudden showers, a miniature waterfall descended upon the berths, so that sleep was well-nigh impossible. Sheer excitement of one's first night journey in Africa would, in any case, keep one awake, and a sudden stop between stations brings the same chill of apprehension as the slowing-up of a transatlantic liner off the Newfoundland ice-fields. Raised on a shaky elbow, the "tenderfoot" keeps vigil through the long hours, and awaits painfully the first streak of dawn. Then comes relaxation as the tropical mugginess of atmosphere yields to the fresher air of higher altitudes, and with a cool morning breeze stirring the bush, which closes in on both sides, one's potential enemies return to

their lairs and sheer weariness claims a willing victim.

The terminus of the direct line to the foot of snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro was our destination, and was to be our first home in Africa—a thought which for one, at least, held infinite possibilities and excitements. This one had been told in England that the arrival of the weekly train at an African Government post was treated as a great event, and that even the sophisticated journeyed to the station to greet arrivals, be they strangers or one's nearest and dearest, and one had scoffed at the idea as an unbelievable provincialism. Yet how this same one's heart thumped with anticipation as the train slowed up and emitted its last snort at the little white-washed station! The prophecy was fulfilled! There were half-a-dozen European faces under khaki helmets and—could it be—the genial smiling face of a *woman*!

Not even the sudden deluge of rain which descended upon the gala outfit could despoil that first welcome of its pleasure, and while a kindly official removed once spotless white shoes, and assisted the struggle into rubber boots, one contemplated with equanimity the sea of mud and water outside, and longed to do battle with it; for half-a-mile away, at the top of the hill, was there not a wee house which was to be a "home" for two years, and which one had never seen, not even in a picture!

A cup of tea served by the hospitable station-master heartened us for the plunge-bath outside, and excitement drove one on, unmindful of the



(Upper) ARRIVING AT AN UP-COUNTRY STATION
(Lower) THE GUARD OF HONOUR

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deluge and the feet of clay which grew heavier with each step in the clinging mud. The old inhabitants plodded along conversing cheerily, but the new-comer gasped and struggled, apparently unobserved, and all but sat down ignominiously. No one of the party seemed to realise that for her this was the beginning of life's greatest adventure. So determined was she to see nothing unpleasant in the surroundings, that the few dilapidated shops and Greek hotels scattered along the road were mere architectural shadows, not to be examined until one's whole-hearted attention had been given to that small temple on the acropolis—a temple disparagingly referred to by sceptical relatives at home as "that three-roomed hut."

With the memory of the tin-roofed Government "homes" clustered about Slough and various other abandoned military depots in England, imagine one's surprise and joy, at the end of the long muddy street, in suddenly facing a hill-side avenue of straight little cypress-trees, suggesting the Riviera, and ascending through them, beneath a pergola dripping purple bougainvillæa blooms, to a rose-embowered, enchanting little white-stone bungalow, from whose spacious verandah one had an uninterrupted view to the far horizon, with its yellow and mauve mountains! What booted it that the furnishings consisted of two dilapidated iron beds, four straight-backed chairs and five or six well-worn pieces of Government furniture? There was space; there was a view; there was a woman's vision to create beauty from apparent ugliness, and it was "home," however humble.

In an incredibly short time the three-roomed hut emerged triumphant, with its stiff chairs petticoated in chintz, the miscellaneous furniture, picked up in the Indian bazaar, similarly treated, and one at last had leisure to study one's surroundings and find what life gave and demanded in an African Government station.

To the woman who is without imagination and resources Africa must soon become a slough of despond, in which she flounders helplessly. She must be able to create her diversions, forget her aversions and devote herself whole-heartedly to the discovery of good in everything, for the new civilisation reveals her delights only to those who have the eager eyes and ears and heart of the explorer ; to all others the book is closed. Amusement, companionship and ordinary healthful exercise the woman must create from very little material, for in few of the Government stations of the interior are they to be found ready-made. She is fortunate if she finds half-a-dozen white women within fifty or a hundred miles, and if congeniality with those women would be an improbability in Europe, it behoves her to cultivate its possibility to the utmost in Africa. To hold oneself aloof from anything which spells European civilisation is quite as destructive as to withhold one's interest in the strange world of black " savagery " which surrounds one.

Equatorial Africa is not a white man's country in its broadest sense, for no country can be such where the menacing sun compels the wearing of a heavy helmet throughout the hours of daylight.



(Upper) AT HOME IN AN UP-COUNTRY STATION

(Lower) "CAMOUFLAGING" THE GOVERNMENT FURNITURE

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To garden successfully, one must be up at day-break and return to one's sheltering roof before 9 A.M., so adieu to the pleasant *café au lait* and the morning siesta. Of course there are those who garden and those who sleep, but the former occupation has its compensations in the miraculous beauty with which Nature responds to one's feeblest efforts at co-partnership with her.

Few white men are in Africa for pleasure, fewer still for profit, but all are here for service of one degree or another ; hence the man in Africa finds his life more or less definitely marked out for him by the powers that be in the mother country. He may be engaged in scientific research, in the study and government of the millions of native inhabitants, or he may lend himself to some infant commercial enterprise ; but, whatever his calling, his work is well defined, and brings recognisable results. The woman, on the other hand, is the "little bit of fluff," the negligible quantity which gives an added note of colour to the surroundings, and chiefly because of her rarity she receives a higher valuation than at home.

Upon her falls the delicate task of keeping alive the perception of true womanhood in all men who have left their women-folk and home ties for long periods of inhibition in uncivilised countries. She must be cheery in sickness and in health ; for her own salvation she must feel and express an intelligent whole-hearted interest in the work of these men, whatever its degree of importance ; her hospitality must exceed the bounds of mere studied politeness, for the Africanised European

is far quicker to perceive a lukewarm perfunctory welcome than is his brother in England.

“To be pleased with everything and please everyone in the place” should be an eleventh commandment in the outposts of the Empire, and the twelfth, “To withhold nothing that is yours from your neighbour,” and that means not only one’s heart and brain and kindly impulse, but all one’s worldly possessions. Woe be to the woman who believes herself independent of her fellow-exiles in Africa ! The day will come when visiting hordes descend unannounced upon her household, when chairs, beds, china and silver must be requisitioned from her neighbours, and when diversions must be created with as little material at hand as is apparently possessed by the conjurer who produces a clucking chicken from the bystander’s pocket.

It is this necessary camaraderie in a new country which breaks down the walls of self-centredness and lets in a flood of warm, humanising influences which one is prone to believe unnecessary in an older civilisation. The lesson is not learnt in a day. Old prejudices and predilections must be faced and put to the death when they evince antagonism to the interests of the community. Here is no question of the highest in authority receiving a homage and consideration which is not honestly striven for by integrity of purpose and genuine kindness. What one gives one receives. As this is true of things spiritual, so it is of the material, and bread cast upon the waters often returns in most unexpected ways.

Even Mother Nature is ever ready to play her



(Upper) THE GLACIERS OF KILIMANJARO AS SEEN FROM THE GARDEN

(Lower) THE EASTER HYACINTH IN AFRICA

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part in the distribution of the greatest good to the greatest number. So simple a gift as a packet of marigold seeds donated to a friend some eight miles distant on the mountain, after flowering generously on the heights, returned its numerous offspring via a water-furrow to the garden of the original donor, there to burst into thousands of golden blooms along the banks of the stream.

Flowers, fruit and a share of all delicacies pass from the more fortunate to the less. Everyone has something to share at one time or another with his neighbour. The gardenless house may be inhabited by a good shot, and a brace of birds returns in the emptied flower-basket of his artistic neighbour, who knows no distinction between a spruce partridge and his edible relative. When a sheep is slaughtered, or one's cherished suckling pigs reach the proper gastronomic stage, the owner divides all with his brother officials, keeping for his personal use only what suffices for one or two meals. If the Swahili cook, after many painful efforts, succeeds in producing an eatable cake, it is forthwith carried to the community tennis court to be eaten by everyone with the community tea, served between games.

Thus the social isolation of life in Africa acts as a stimulant to one's better nature and a corrective to the selfishness which is often engendered by the luxury and ease of modern civilisation. All possible effort is put forth by the more important members of these tiny communities to draw everyone into such sports and amusements as can be crowded into the cool evening hours, for only by making

others feel their importance in the general social scheme, however limited its scope and primitive its method, can sufficient members be mustered for real competition, and competition, we know, is the life of many things besides trade.

For purposes of general amusement and recreation there are practically no "class" distinctions, save those of colour and race. Everyone, be he clerk or peer, is entitled to the privileges of Club and Sports, unless he prove objectionable to the majority. The mere fact of his residence, whether permanent or temporary, grants eligibility to his share of the social life of the little colony.

Where else could you find a community of some twelve or fifteen European men supporting a two-court tennis club and a fair nine-hole golf course, reclaimed in a year from impassable bush plains? The cheapness of black labour in Africa naturally aids in the metamorphosis, but it also requires good-fellowship, the downing of all social barriers and cheerful sharing of comparatively heavy expense among the none too generously paid Government officials.

After the games of golf or tennis, small parties gather at the various houses for the evening drink, which is rated as indispensable to health in the tropics, where the evening air calls forth the lurking germs of fever. "Small chop" (sandwiches) accompany the sundown medicine of Scotch or rye, and the time from six-thirty to eight o'clock passes in the telling of tales (some "out of school"), the recounting of varied experiences in other parts of the world, and discussion of happenings, political



(Upper) ZINNIAS IN AFRICA

(Lower) THE GARDEN AT THE FOOT OF SNOW-CAPPED KILIMANJARO

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and otherwise, "at home." A name is casually mentioned by a new-comer: "Oh yes, he was stationed with me on the Gold Coast," breaks in the "old timer," and so the circle ever widens, and new links of interest are forged in that human chain of younger sons who have gone forth to represent the empirical Mother.

Occasionally there is an Indian tea-party to enliven the station, not that the party itself is anything but lugubrious—from the impassive faces of the hosts to the rather lukewarm beverages served—but the funereal toasts proposed in halting English by the unsmiling master of ceremonies to the representatives of the Great English Government afford intense, though unintentional, amusement to the Europeans present. Not a word of the long speech learned and recited by the well-meaning official toast-master is understood by his brother Indians, so the response of the European *Bwana Mkubwa* (great master) is usually made in Swahili, quite as unintelligible to the majority of the European guests because it is far too correct to be understood by the ordinary dabbler in that difficult tongue.

When "honours are even" we resume our seats at the long table and nibble our cake and chocolate, whilst our hosts (wearing their shirt-tails outside their trousers) hover about, solicitous for our comfort.

On momentous occasions, such as the birthday celebration in honour of the Aga Khan, the High Priest of all Ismailia Mohammedans, the entertainment embraces a maypole dance performed by weary-looking, bandy-legged Indians, with the

ever-present waving shirt-tail, each man holding a coloured cotton streamer in one hand and two sticks in the other. With these he strikes first at those held by the man in front, and then behind, more or less in unison with the discords emanating from a wheezy harmonium, which occupies the place of honour in the centre of the circle. Added diversion is sometimes afforded by an obtrusive *m toto* (child), his mouth filled with kerosene oil, spitting vigorously into the flame of a lighted match, thereby producing intermittent fireworks, which are loudly applauded by the exhausted maypolites. This subject for the S.P.C.C. being reluctantly banished from the foreground, a group of high-voiced little schoolboys, dressed in diminutive frock-coats plus the junior shirt-tail, indulge in a dialogue on the value of money versus education (in which, of course, virtue is bound to be its own reward), or some such laudable subject.

As the entertainment at this stage is growing rather thin, and our hosts appear somewhat anxious and weary, the European ladies adjourn by invitation to view their Hindu sisters, hidden from vulgar male curiosity. These also are celebrating in mild fashion the birthday of their great religious patron ; but here is real beauty—soft, dusky flesh, drowsy black eyes, tiny brown hands, and lovely clinging silks of various hues, silver-bordered, framing the delicate features and falling in soft drapings to the feet, covering the coarse day garments, which are just visible as the little bodies sway and bend in homage to the absent hero of their mystical religion.

Everywhere about the floor of the inner sanctum lie wee brown babies, sleeping peacefully in their stiff, gold-lace caps, looking not unlike luscious chocolate drops decorated by a French confectioner.

This charming private view ends the evening's entertainment, and the official guests, after expressing their gratitude for the hospitality, depart in close formation, so that the blessed anthem of *God Save the King* may be rendered but *once* by the "band"—it being the custom to greet all European officials and speed them homeward by this suitable selection, sometimes unrecognisable as rendered by a native orchestra, and decidedly painful when repeated some twelve times of an evening.

The Indian "party" is a rare Sunday afternoon event, for which all Europeans turn out in their best day clothes—almost the only opportunity afforded for any dress, save tennis and dinner.

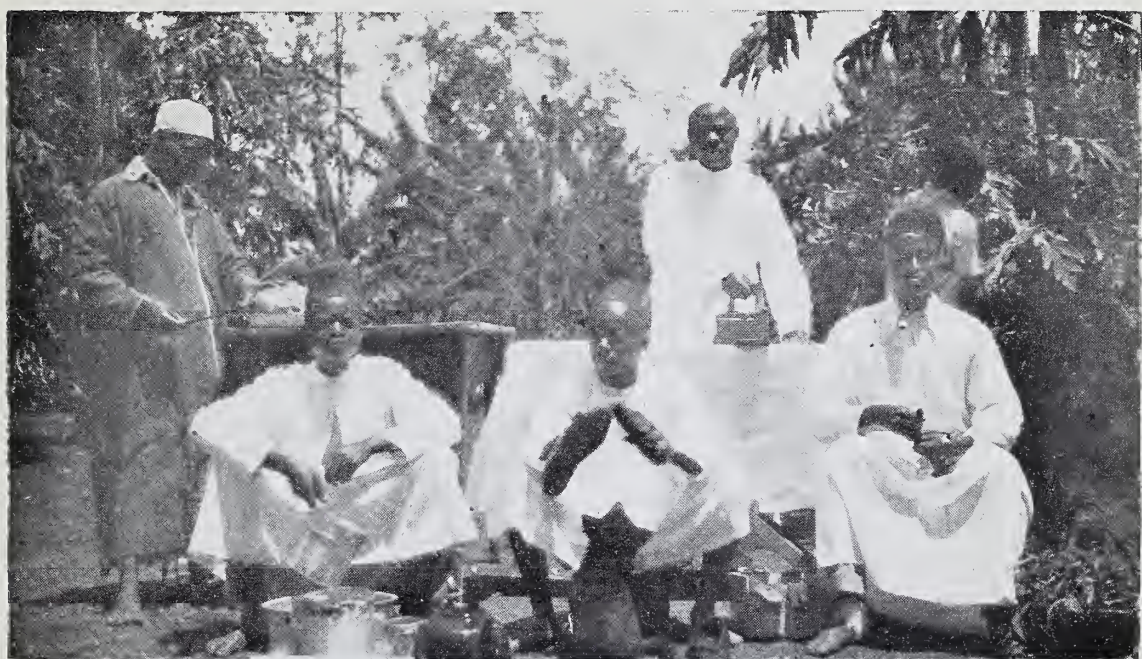
One of the saving graces of life in a British station is the unvarying observance of the small conventions which mark the society of civilisation. A man may be the only European official, with no neighbour nearer than one hundred miles, but he and his wife (if he has one) will dress as carefully for their lonely dinner as if in the midst of a London season, and the gleaming candles, the flowers and quiet unobtrusive service are considered as essential in Africa as in Mayfair or Upper Fifth Avenue.

It is something of a shock to a European woman new to the country, and accustomed to good English servants and possibly the luxury of a personal maid, to be confronted by a household

staff of four or five black "boys" understanding no word of English. It requires patience and cultivation of the art of pantomime to reach a common ground of understanding between mistress and "maid," but the boys are very quick to observe, very willing to learn, usually honest and rarely impertinent, and one soon acquires sufficient words of the strange language of the native to make oneself understood.

It is a musical language when correctly spoken; there is something infinitely more gracious in the Swahili house-boy's "*Ahsante, Mem-Sahib*" ("Thank you, Mistress"), than in the stolid silence of the American servant or the hypocritical "thank you, madam," of the English after-war parlour-maid. The spotless white *kanzu*, not unlike the old-fashioned night-shirt, which reaches to the bare feet, and a finely embroidered white linen *fez* covering their shaven heads, gives the African servant a dignity unknown to the southern "nigger" of civilisation, with his loudly checked shirt, ill-tailored suit and bulldog-toed yellow shoes. The *kanzu* is the costume worn by all male Swahili coast-dwellers, and in the interior has been adopted not only by the house-boys serving European masters, but by many natives of the better type. Otherwise the accepted costume of the native of the Kilimanjaro country is a draped cotton cloth or blanket. The *totos*, or small children, are blessedly unhampered by anything more than a string of beads, and their pretty brown bodies seem amply clothed at that.

When one is a new-comer to the district and the



(Upper) THE HOUSEHOLD "STAFF"

(Lower) THE TABLE-BOY AND "LADY'S MAID"

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bride of a *Bwana Mkubwa*, one is given a series of surprise parties by the principal wives of the native chiefs. An imposing appearance they make, followed by less important members of their household bearing gifts of fresh eggs, chickens, the skin of wild animals, or a rudely carved flower-holder. These women have an unmistakable look of caste, with finely chiselled features and enviable dignity of bearing. Hand-shaking is usually indulged in between the wives of chiefs and the wives of their white officials, and although these black aristocrats look clean enough, after a few such greetings the European woman retires hastily to her bathroom for a vigorous hand-scrubbing, as the native woman eats all her food with her fingers, and, it may be surmised from their stickiness, licks them "clean" afterwards.

Until we took up our residence there had been little or no dancing in the district; and as this seemed an essential and healthy recreation, we utilised our spacious cement-floored verandah for a ballroom, and started a "series" of fancy-dress parties. The floor, hand-polished with native beeswax and turpentine and rubbed to Mansion House perfection by many bare black feet, was quite dazzling on the first occasion, when with visiting officials and their wives we numbered some six women and twenty-four men, several of whom were kind enough to don feminine garb for the evening to equalise the sexes. Gibson girls, veiled ladies of the harem, bonneted and hoop-skirted Victorian flirts, with stiff Sisal curls, summer triflers with shady hats and flowered

voile gowns, made a bevy of maidens equalled only by a 'Varsity musical comedy, and although somewhat highly coloured as to complexion and decidedly free as to leg action, they added greatly to the zest of the occasion in their borrowed sex and plumage.

Most of these costumes were made under male supervision by the local Indian tailors, and were a complete surprise to the ladies present, which spoke well of the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the transplanted Englishman.

The weekly train often brings notables, from home or abroad, who expect amusement or instruction for a week or more, and there are always lesser officials travelling to and from the coast, with an occasional "bigwig," such as a judge, a mighty hunter or that *rara avis*—a Governor. These travellers usually bring their tents, cooks and personal servants, but one is expected, if possessed of a vacant room, to receive them as house-guests, be they strangers or friends. When honoured by the official visit of the Governor one "takes up one's bed and walks" to the nearest neighbour, who usually discovers an unoccupied crevice in his two- or three-roomed house for the extra guests. Otherwise the "hosts" take to tents and make a picnic of the affair, finding much enjoyment in dining as guests at their own table without the attendant anxieties and struggles with the kitchen staff. These unexpected visits are often a pleasant break in one's quiet life, though not unattended by difficulties when one considers that the most imposing residence consists of three rooms

and a verandah ; but as Africa is the country *par excellence* for the creation of something from nothing, behold a charming house of banana leaves quickly erected for the accommodation of one's guest, another for his kit, still another for his servants, and when the green leaves become dry and dusty the miniature village is pulled down and another erected in the course of a few hours by skilful natives. If one wishes to present a really smart appearance, one has a guest-house, with thatched roof, mud walls, white-washed and green-shuttered, and furnished with whatever is movable from the mansion to the hut.

It is surprising what a concealing dress of pretty chintz will do for an unlovely black iron bed, and our European sisters might well take cognisance of the ingenuity of the African hostess. One grows inordinately proud of one's resourcefulness after a time, but possibly this is pardonable in a country where the accomplishment of anything savouring of European civilisation is attended by so many difficulties.

Life is not all a bed of roses in Africa ; there is always the lurking fear of fever and ill-health from many sinister causes. At nightfall one's legs must be encased in mosquito boots practically all the year on the coast and six months in the interior, as the countless variety of gnats, mosquitoes and biting flies hover about under dinner-tables and chairs to feast upon the unfortunate females who prefer a pretty slipper and silken ankle to sensible, though unlovely, protection. To be compelled to wear ugly knee-length leather boots as the complement of a

diaphanous evening frock is a sore trial for any fastidious woman, but the wise ones do it, and thus avoid one of the fever dangers of Africa, although not all mosquitoes are malaria-carriers. One is told by the oldest inhabitant to take heed only of the mosquito that stands on his head while biting, but before one has decided whether the intruder has entered head first or tail first the deadly work may be accomplished, and after a lapse of three weeks one knows the answer.

In Africa, avoiding the various intrigues against longevity becomes a daily sport, and for men, unless stationed in a particularly poisonous district, it seems a fairly healthy country. Women suffer from many causes—unaccustomed heat, glaring light, the difficulty (which many never attempt to overcome) of making themselves understood by the native servant, lack of accustomed activity, social and physical, all play havoc with her more delicate mechanism. Here again the personality, resourcefulness and character of the woman enter into the making or marring of her own life, and that of others associated with her in voluntary exile from all that is familiar, and from the so-called amenities of civilisation. If she occupies the long hours of enforced inactivity and pulsing heat with good books, restful memories and happy plans for the future, if she conscientiously studies the language, history and customs of the native races surrounding her, if she lends herself and all she has to the life of the little station, if she determines to miss nothing that has ministered to her comfort and well-being in the



(Upper) THE GUEST-HOUSE

(Lower) MAHOMMED SERVING TEA

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Old World, and to be content with what is afforded in the New, if she loves the blue skies that smile on her flowers, the silver stars that glisten through the night, if she fears nothing, and, above all, allows her sense of humour full play over the rough surfaces of daily living, then will the heart of Africa open itself to her and she will have learned that the "perception of the inexhaustibleness of Nature is an Immortal Youth."

CHAPTER IV

AN OFFICIAL *SAFARI*¹

The Call of the Mountain—Journeying by Go-Cart—First Visit to Native Settlements—Friendly Chiefs—The Bridal Camp—Courtesy and Intelligence of the Native—An Official Meeting—“Lobbying”—Some Amusing Cases—Adjusting Ancient Laws to Modern Needs—Safety of White Women in Africa

It is not given to everyone to look up from one's kitchen garden at a snow-covered mountain rising to an altitude of 19,780 feet, and when one knows that hidden in the banana groves on the slopes of that mountain are countless native settlements and 125,000 black subjects of His Majesty King George, one may be forgiven an impatient desire to abandon the killing of slugs on one's cabbages for the greater attractions of near-by travel.

The benevolent authority exercised by the mother country over her millions of dusky children in Africa is entrusted to the sagacity and broad-mindedness of officials, aided by the advice and general principles laid down by the Governor, and in turn by his chief, the Colonial Secretary; but the success attending these united efforts is largely due to the personality of the official, and the interest he takes in unravelling the mysteries of the African mind.

Many years of intimate study of native customs and characteristics are required before ground is broken for real advancement, and this study is carried on, principally, by meeting the native

¹ Journey.

chiefs in their own villages, surrounded by their councils of "elders," or old men grown wise in their time and generation.

An official *safari* for the Government representative means travelling on foot some sixty to a hundred miles and holding meetings, or *shauris*, in the chief native settlements of the district, where all matters pertaining to taxes, ownership and use of water-furrows, agriculture, marriage and divorce are brought before the white *Bwana Mkubwa* for discussion and adjustment.

If the slug-killer is invited to journey with her lord (and she would be a foolish slug-killer indeed who did not accept the invitation), the *safari* assumes unforeseen proportions and unexpected picturesque qualities.

No native porter is expected to carry a load of more than forty pounds weight on a six- or eight-mile "trek," and when a household of two abandons its rooftree for life under canvas, necessitating the transport of all conveniences and three to five weeks' supplies, some fifty native heads must assume responsibility for one's luggage.

Great is the rivalry among these native carriers for the more interesting-looking burdens, as well as for the lightest in weight. Pots and pans, buckets and kitchen utensils are designated by the leader for the most worm-like of his companions, and the smallest and least assertive porter is usually left with the heaviest load. A duffel bag, holding the camp mattresses, is the most coveted prize, as its yielding surface affords a pleasant pillow when the carrier lays down his burden for wayside rest.

The native porter is a marvel of speed and endurance, often keeping up a four-mile-per-hour pace for half-a-day without halting to more than stretch his legs or readjust his head burden. They are a cheery lot as well, and can often be heard a mile distant chanting in delightful unison as they tramp through the bush or climb the steep hills.

A mountain *safari* obviously cannot be taken at the speed possible in the level plains, but the energetic native invariably chooses the almost perpendicular "short cut" in preference to the longer and better-worn paths, and thus gains time for rest before the less venturesome members overtake him.

The porter entrusted with the extra coat or camera of the *Mem-Sahib* (mistress) immediately gains caste over his fellows, and the gun-bearer or flower-gatherer considers himself equally set apart among the favoured number. They quickly observe which loads are for the private use of the *Bwana* or his wife, such as chairs, tables, lunch-kit, etc., needed for a hasty "al fresco" meal, and the bearers of these attach themselves proudly to their master in order to render quick service and earn a smile of appreciation from the *Bwana's* "*bibi*" (lady).

The halt for a belated breakfast beneath wayside trees makes a pleasant break in the morning's march, which must begin at dawn if any considerable distance is to be covered before the sun is deemed menacing to the weaker sex.

Seated on an ancient mule for the steeper hills, or bowling along the level stretches of well-worn native paths in a comfortably upholstered rickshaw, the unofficial guest feels far less fatigue than



(Upper) PORTERS WAITING ORDERS TO TAKE UP LOADS

(Lower) FORTY HEADS AS LUGGAGE CARRIERS

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her pedestrian partner; and as the light wicker go-cart is drawn by three well-trained boys, assisted by sundry willing helpers over difficult passages, the *safari* is often left behind, and the *bibi* suddenly finds herself receiving the greetings meant for her lord and master from the salaaming chiefs and natives drawn up beside the road. One soon learns that this is not "according to Hoyle," and after unintentionally stealing the official thunder a few times, one waits the arrival of the others if a reception is indicated ahead—an action entailing no small degree of self-sacrifice.

Love of adulation is a very human failing, and there is a certain thrill of satisfaction in passing between long lines of reverently bared heads, even though they be black, woolly ones. The African "*Hujambo, Bibi!*" ("Greetings, Lady!") is not equalled in dignity by any European salutation common to the masses, so one may perhaps be pardoned for taking undue liberty with the orders of the day. The first official *safari* is naturally so momentous an occasion to the novice that there is a steady infringement of rules, but one's intuitions quickly point to errors of judgment, and the High Court deals leniently with offenders of the gentler sex.

The lower slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro are deeply cut by a series of rocky river-beds, at certain seasons so flooded as to make difficult crossing, and one is usually "chaired" through the swift-flowing stream by lusty natives, loudly directed from the towering banks by their chief and his councillors, which only confuses the wading pilots and terrifies the occupant of the human chair.

As the thickly populated villages are in the banana groves on the level slopes between intersecting streams, one usually enjoys a smooth passage at the end of the journey. The rocky path becomes a broad flat road, closely hedged with waving *dracæna* ; the entrance to each village is indicated by a break in the foliage wall—a delightful-looking little lane leading away from the main road like a dim green tunnel, luring one on to new mysteries, and filled with wee black folk peeping out between the tree trunks.

On a first *safari* one almost begrudges the stops necessary for food preparation and consumption, there is always so much to be seen “just around the corner,” and so many corners that must remain uninvestigated. Flowers of every colour and variety call to one from bush and forest paths, and to show interest in one wayside blossom is to encourage the plucking of every sort of weed by the camp-followers unhampered by loads and eager to receive recognition from the official party. Hence one reaches the journey’s end accompanied by a fresh detachment of self-constituted burden-bearers, whose armfuls of withering branches must be smilingly received and delicately banished.

This particular *safari* led through some districts where few white women had ever been seen, and hundreds of curious native men and women attached themselves to our retinue, until the ant-like procession dragged behind for a quarter of a mile.

Arrival at the official camp was the signal for inspection, the old women pressing particularly



ENTERING THE FOREST. TWO METHODS OF FEMININE TRANSPORT
IN AFRICA

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close, uttering shrill cries of joy and greeting to the white *Bwana*, whom they already held in reverence and gratitude for his benevolent justice of the past, and who now assumed added importance in their eyes because he had taken unto himself a wife and was as other men.

Marriage to the native is a serious step, fraught with great importance, economical and otherwise, and a wife (particularly if she be the first) is held in great honour. Apropos of this, the importance which they attached to the marriage of their European administrator was disclosed in the fact that throughout the district a new calendar date gained currency—"the year when the *Bwana* went home to fetch his *Bibi*"; and during our early weeks in the station several letters were received from native chiefs, filled with sage counsel as to the treatment of a wife !

At various stops along the *safari* route there are official camping-grounds set apart for the visits of the Government representative, and these little camps were, for our first trip, made very fresh and beautiful. An attractive open spot, shaded by great trees, is usually chosen, and here are erected the *bandas*, or huts of green banana leaves. The principal and most enlightened chief had taken a step in advance of his neighbours, and erected a charming little mud-house with a roofed half-open verandah, and into every crevice was thrust a gay blossom of some sort. A broad path had been made leading from the road, flanked on either side by transplanted waving banana-trees, forming a triumphal approach fit for heroes. Milk-bottles

and empty tins had been utilised to hold a wealth of flowers, "nipped," one might suppose, from the near-by Mission garden.

The Chief and his *wazee* (elders) usually meet the *safari* several miles from the chosen camp, and accompany the "white master" to the spot where the official *shauris* are to take place. Here they scatter into groups beneath the trees and take counsel among themselves as to the grave matters shortly to be laid before the Government official. This proceeding is not unlike our modern "lobbying"; the various points for and against some proposed "legislative measure" are argued, sifted and weighed until the salient points are arrived at and the spokesman for the "bill" chosen. One group joins another by invitation of the more important, and there are always the lesser "goats" among the sheep, whose attitude plainly declares their sense of inferiority and unimportance. Yet these groups of outsiders watch jealously and observantly for any sign of "which way the wind is blowing," as indicated by the gestures and occasional words heard from the inner ring. Frequently the elders adjourn to the near-by hut of the Chief for greater privacy and, possibly, for a heartening drink of *pombe*—the native liquor.

Then the work of settling into camp begins in earnest. Tents are raised, furniture unpacked, and a soothing cup of tea is scarcely tasted before the mother and favourite wives of the Chief arrive with gifts and greetings.

A sheep specially fattened in the family hut comes baaing a friendly welcome, and is promptly

turned over to the native porters for their evening meal. A half-dozen crowing roosters, carried like an armful of kittens, next appear, then fresh eggs, delicate-flavoured little bananas, and occasionally pair of four-legged carved wooden stools, one for the Big Bear, a smaller one for the Little Bear, and if there were a baby in the official party, doubtless there would be a third stool for the littlest bear of all.

One often feels as if one were living a fairy-tale in Africa, partly because of the vast scale in which Nature displays herself and so dwarfs the human into pygmy stature, partly because of the simplicity of life and the delight one takes in childish surprises, holding some forgotten fragrance and splendour of the attic days of make-believe—"that rich charm which the least possession had for us, in consequence of the pooriness of our treasures."

One cannot come into close contact with the black world of Africans without noting that they possess the boon which all civilised nations have striven for in vain—true contentment of spirit, and, in general, true relationship toward their fellow-beings.

Their "Pagan" laws and religion are unconsciously founded on the difficult Biblical code of "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you." Their forbearance with each other and with the benevolent Governments which have made them subject races is not mere apathy, but is the ruling principle of tribal law and custom, reaching far back into unwritten history.

Facing an official gathering of some hundreds of

native men seated on the ground before the European official, one is impressed with the alert intelligence in the sparkling eyes, the reserve of manner, the innate courtesy with which they wait on each other's opinions, the patient attention given to the halting interpreter, and the delicious humour which they are quick to employ, and as quick to perceive and enjoy in others, even when directed at themselves.

Their knotty problems of property rights, which were once settled by poisoned arrows, with quick adaptability they now bring before the representative of the protective Government.

The fact that one Government has waged war upon another in which the native was forced to participate, and that white men of a new and unknown nationality now control their destiny, they accept without resentment, believing that the change must be ordained for their ultimate good. Could any guardian power so trusted let down its millions of subjects or exploit them for its own ends?

Truly one searches in vain for any signal benefit accruing to the nations which have appointed themselves to the trusteeship of the African native. The presence of a ruling white power makes for the general peace of these vast Equatorial possessions. Internecine warfare is prohibited; bloodshed between tribes is quickly discovered and punished, as are the lesser crimes of cattle-theft, illegal seizure of a man's wives or his personal property; but all these protective measures are to the benefit of the native, and there remains unanswered the question of benefit to the governing nation. All



THE CAMP AT DAWN



A PUZZLED SPECTATOR

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the machinery of officialdom must be kept oiled and in repair at the expense of the home Government ; even the *Bwana's safari* entails some slight expenditure, despite the *bandas* and burnt-offerings of sheep and chickens, and the adjustment of affairs for each of the twenty-two districts of Tanganyika requires the constant attention of two or three assistants to each Chief District Commissioner, all of whom must be housed and fed, and be able to clothe themselves and their families, more or less adequately, from the living wage provided by the Government.

For all this benevolent guardianship the four million of black subjects make return chiefly in hut-tax, averaging about two shillings annually per head, and the greater the number of dusky wives belonging to each establishment, and requiring the dignity of a separate hut, the heavier the tax on their legal providers.

Yet the hut-tax totals of £400,000 annually, which constitute the chief native contribution, plus the 30 per cent. Custom duty demanded for imported necessities, leave a heavy deficit of governing expense, which so far has been met by the "grant in aid" of the British Government.

To be sure, we must have coaling stations for our fleet, we must keep unbroken the communicating links of our colonial possessions, we must maintain our trading centres, "Manchester must be preserved" ; but one wonders what amount is really added to the financial budget of Manchester by the import into Tanganyika of her cotton cloth for native beauties.

As this is an unofficial record, and one is forced by contract to set down one's own opinions, un-augmented by inside information, one is of the opinion that Britain is acting more as a beneficent, indulgent mother to her Equatorial children than as the hard-headed parent who looks for and demands results in kind for her expenditure.

All these whys and wherefores pass through one's mind as one gazes into the trusting eyes of the native chiefs and their councillors gathered about the official who has *safaried* to them in order to meet them on their own ground, and thus deal more understandingly with their difficulties.

Few districts have a common dialect, or even a common language, and however proficient the British Administrator in Swahili (the *lingua franca*), an interpreter conversant with many dialects is required to establish the *entente cordiale* between official and subject. Our particular native Jack-of-all-languages was a loose-jointed, stuttering giant, affecting European clothing, and much given to the awkward dramatic gestures and grotesque poses of the Evangelistic soul-saver. His wind-jammer methods of interpreting the quiet, incisive words of the white *Bwana* were received with mild mirth and tolerance by the sage old philosophers whom he addressed.

All sorts of unexpected *shauris* (affairs) are presented for settlement, some amusing, some tragic, some throwing much desired light on obscure tribal history, and many exhibiting an amazing admixture of Pagan superstition with modern ethical standards.

There was the case of the man sent by his Chief to close a certain water-furrow (which furnished irrigation to the district) on the land of his neighbour, and divert it to his own. The messenger was met by the infuriated wife of the furrow-user and was sent back to the Chief with a damaged head and sundry bruises inflicted by the lusty lady. The furrow continued to fructify the soil of the neighbour, and when the matter was brought before the Commissioner for settlement, it transpired that by tribal law it was unlawful for a man to return blows administered by the wife of another man, for the very simple reason that by so doing he was usurping the rights of the husband. The injured one may, however, go to the husband and demand a goat to be "sacrificed" for his purification, and, incidentally, for the replenishment of his larder.

As any wrongdoing conveys uncleanness to the person wronged, one may well imagine the native day to be filled with a round of sacrificial slaughterings; but as there are many hundred head of cattle, sheep and goats still existing in each district, one must conclude that there is an amazing lack of insult and injury between members of the community.

Despite the thirty odd years in which the African mind has been more or less peacefully penetrated by European civilisation, much aboriginal superstition remains to be combated by white officialdom, and it is safe to surmise that much will remain a century hence.

The native has ever held the birth of twins to be

inauspicious, and in former days one of the unfortunates was put to death. During the official *shauri* a father "cursed" with triplets brought his trouble to the Commissioner for adjustment in the presence of the assembly of elders, saying, "One child is good, O *Bwana*, that we know, and equally that two at one time are an evil, but now that misfortune has brought me *three* children in the same hour, I know not what to do that the curse may be averted from my hut." The wary judge could but reply: "If one is good and two are bad, then three must be excellent, and will cause you to rejoice in many grandchildren when old age is upon you"; which decision was greeted by many grunts of approval from the assembly.

The *shauri* of the "white-headed boy" was not so easily adjusted, and required delicate handling, as the weeping black woman who produced her albino offspring in court had been driven from the family hut by an angry husband disclaiming fatherly responsibility for the "little white devil." Each parent had been married previously and each possessed children of proper dusky hue by these former alliances, hence the responsibility for this eccentricity of nature had of necessity to be left undetermined; and as the husband could produce no evidence against the wife's integrity, he was bidden to receive her back with his colourless child into the bosom of the family.

A very old man, with suspiciously bleary eyes, awaited the end of the more important business of the day to make his way to the front row of the



(Upper) EARLY MORNING AT AN OFFICIAL CAMP

(Lower) AFTERNOON AT THE SAME PLACE

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Court of Appeal. In a whispering voice he declared that many people in his district were being "bewitched," and he sought the white *Bwana's* aid in exorcising the devil responsible for these evil deeds. Terse questioning by the Commissioner reduced the number of those afflicted to the petitioner, who gave as evidence of his particular case that "his legs wobbled when he walked."

"How large is your *pombe* cup?" asked the Commissioner. (*Pombe* is the native home-brewed beer.)

"About so, *Bwana*," answered the puzzled plaintiff, indicating a measure about gallon size.

"Then make it so," said the *Bwana*, holding up his littlest finger, "and your legs will no longer be bewitched."

The rickety old drunkard retired amid shouts of laughter from his confrères, and the official meeting adjourned with cheers for the great white *ndume* (bull) who could outwit them in their own superstitions.

If matters of importance have been considered and adjusted by the Commissioner, the breaking-up of the *shauri* is followed by a ceremonial dance of honour, with the official often the reluctant centre of the prancing circle.

Old men link arms and follow with fantastic steps the leader (who is usually the Chief of the district), marking time with his staff held aloft, and uttering a single odd cry of joy and satisfaction, which is chorused and embellished by the old men and young bloods permitted to be present in the assembly for their better instruction.

As the weary British official retires to his tent at the end of the day, and the chorus of praise gains beauty and sweetness as the singers swing down the woodland path to their huts in the dusky banana groves, one cannot but feel that these plaudits of the African savage must ring as sweetly in the official ear as those of a Madison Square or Covent Garden audience to the popular figure of the day.

Tramping along the mountain roads from one camp to another, accompanied by the Chief of the district and his *wazee*, questions of custom, property, ancient tribal wars occur to one's mind, and these are argued by the Chief and his councillors, and finally answered for the enlightenment of the Commissioner.

Like all children of nature, the African is at his best in his own familiar terrain, and these *safaris* are productive of far greater results than if the same adjustment of affairs had been undertaken from behind the official desk in the *boma*, with the native in unaccustomed surroundings, standing at attention and conscious of his disadvantage.

Seat him comfortably on the ground beneath his own trees, wrapped in his blanket, with his upright staff beside him and the *Bwana* quietly observant in his chair as he listens and questions, sometimes directly, sometimes through the interpreter, and all shyness disappears. The native chief is no longer on the defensive because he has been haled into the white man's court, but is a self-respecting dignitary, surrounded by his councillors, and able



(Upper) CHAGGA "BEEHIVE" HUT AND HOUSEHOLD PET
(Lower) THE CHIEF'S COUNCILLORS

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to present his problems without the distraction of unfamiliar surroundings.

There is great pride of ancestry in these native chiefs: visiting the principal hut of one of the most enlightened, we were shown the "family tree," reaching back some twelve generations, and embroidered by the ubiquitous "Singer sewing-machine with attachments" into the state robe or *shuka* worn by the chief on important occasions.

Tribal custom is the great god who has controlled their destinies for as many generations as are traceable, and it is the difficult task of the British Administrator to bring these customs without defamation into alignment with modern policies of government—no light responsibility when one considers that the ramifications of tribal law include witchcraft, superstition, sacrifice, the vulnerability of the living to the curse of the dying, the venerated abilities of the rain-maker, the rain-preventer, the medicine-man, the crop-producer, etc., *ad infinitum*.

Yet these ancient beliefs, long ago discarded by more advanced peoples, seem to interfere comparatively little with the willingness of the African native to accept the dictum of his strange European adviser. Rather his superstitions and Pagan customs seem to endow him with keener intelligence and vision, and far greater stability, than his enlightened black brother of the United States.

To the casual observer he seems to wear his ancient customs more as an artistic decoration than as a *de facto* governing principle of his life, even as a pretty twentieth-century woman proudly

wears the mended fichu or cameo brooch of her great-grandmother to complete her Paris gown.

The African native is a very long way from Paris gowns, and one hopes ardently that he may never have knowledge of them; but though classed as a "savage," in intelligence, courtesy, respect and character he is far in advance of the members of his race who have migrated to the New World.

I well remember a visit to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, not so many years ago, when delightful walks were brought to an abrupt end by a general protest from the community based on the "danger" to a white woman from chance encounter with the black "savage" of the Southern States. Yet in Africa I have never known fear of a native. I have slept in the station with no further protection for me or my house than a black house-boy snoring on his mat outside the screened door of the verandah, and on *safari* been left alone at a mountain camp with my tent flap open to the watchful stars and my black servants the only familiar humans within ten miles.

Europeanising or Americanising is responsible for making the black man of civilisation a menace to the white. May our present Government never be guilty of this grievous error of "advancement," and with the delicate consideration and discrimination now shown in her native policy this seems a very remote possibility.



CONTRASTS: THE *BIVANA* AND A SHY VISITOR

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CHAPTER V

THROUGH THE LAND OF MASAI WARRIORS

Our First Visit to Neighbours—Dressing the Staff—Our Host—Strawberries!—Vicissitudes of a Kitchen Garden—Off through Lion Country—The Dutch “Piggery”—Some Babies—Tall Grass and “Ticks”—A Masai Dance—Trouble—Pathless Plains—The Beautiful “Warriors”

WHEN one has been tied to an African bush settlement for nearly two years, with only fleeting glimpses of any European faces other than the fifteen “official” ones within a stone’s throw of one’s own rooftree, the lure of a visit to a neighbouring district holds great possibilities of adventure. Hence, when the *Bwana* announced that official business would shortly take him to the Masai country, some fifty miles distant, for a *safari* of three weeks’ duration, excitement reigned supreme in the household.

Although we were to be the guests of a brother official for several days, the actual journey was to take us far afield of our usual haunts, and hasty preparations for all possible contingencies were in order.

For the first part of our trip the surviving “best” garments of our original European wardrobe must be carefully selected for the edification of society in that other mountain station which we had been told was more like a quiet Surrey village than anything which Africa had produced elsewhere.

Even the house-boys were imbued with the

desire to cut a dash among their neighbouring confrères, and the favoured three (including the *toto*) who were to accompany us as personal "maids" and valets were abject in their plea for new *kanzus*.

The turban of the Indian cook, an imposing creation of cunning twists and turns, now reposed at full length on the grass to bleach, and covered some twenty feet of our tiny plot of green turf.

The cook's boy squatted for hours beside the water-furrow in the banana grove polishing with earth and sand the travelling kitchen utensils. Only the overweening desire to cause heart-burnings in the breast of some far-distant kitchen-boy who should witness the unpacking of culinary treasures could have induced this strenuous massage of the family aluminium.

The three lusty natives who drew my rickshaw on ordinary journeys paid me an evening visit as soon as news was spread abroad of our impending departure. They had heard that we were travelling by motor, and great was their grief at the prospect of being left behind. Their fears were quickly dispelled on learning that the tour *à la* Ford was for one day only, and that thereafter their services would be required for the *Mem-Sahib's* one-wheeled carriage.

The following morning at sunrise these three rather uncivilised members of the staff could be seen in nature's garb, busily washing their khaki sailor suits in the furrow farthest removed from the house. As the African sunshine and light atmospheric conditions render any wet garment ready for wear within half-an-hour of its laying-out

on grass or shrubs, the nude state of the rickshaw-boys was a temporary measure, causing no anxiety or comment.

Of our black household, numbering ten (including the rickshaw-boys, whose duties were desultory), there remained only the "worm," a trusted, ancient servant, who usually guarded our few treasures while we were absent, and the *shamba*-boy, for whose artistic talent as a gardener there seemed small need on such a journey as we contemplated.

Nevertheless his voice was raised in protest at being left behind, and at the last moment, when the caravan of porters was already on the move, and the *Bwana* and his wife were lost to sight in a cloud of Ford-raised dust, the good old *shamba*-boy happily espied a discarded and ribless sunshade on the verandah and jubilantly joined the procession, not to relinquish his trophy until he arrived three days later at our first stopping-place, some fifty miles distant. Here he was received with derision by the family and servants alike, and was delivered over to the driver of our car as a "return load" to be set down only when in the vicinity of the cabbages and carrots he had so basely deserted.

Our genial host at A——, the beautiful little settlement on the slopes of Mount Meru, was in fine fettle on our arrival, and greeted us joyously from the depths of an amazingly modern motor-pit, above which was extended the invalid Ford of a neighbouring planter, and to which our host was rendering first aid.

And herein was revealed another of those secrets of successfully combating African ennui. For this

most lovable of men combined a bubbling enthusiasm for his work as a Government servant with a boy's love of mechanics, more particularly such as pertained to any variety of motor-propelled vehicle.

His fine cement-floored garage was the hospital for every broken-down, dilapidated and reluctant motor cycle or car whose disease baffled the home-made remedies and skill of the owner, and our host was never so happy as when tuning-up a halting engine or extracting unsuspected keepsakes from a long-suffering oil tank.

Our stay in this delightful spot was all too short. We revelled in the spongy turf of the village green ; in viewing and reviewing the beauty and the history of the many trophies which had fallen to the gun of our host, and which now adorned the walls of his comfortable home ; in exchanging calls with friendly neighbours and (dare we confess it ?) disgracing ourselves as gourmets in perhaps the greatest treat of all—*real strawberries and cream !*

No one who has passed his life in civilised lands can appreciate the longing of the exile forced to live in the African bush country for the almost unheard-of luxury of European fruit.

Certain trees there are in many upland gardens which produce a limited variety of tropical fruits, and one is deeply grateful for such in a country whose extreme heat engenders almost unquenchable thirst. But berries and succulent garden produce requiring much moisture, rich soil and moderate temperature for slow germination, are a rare luxury enjoyed by the few.

Our own patch of ground, designated for some unknown reason the "kitchen garden," never produced anything of use in the culinary department save a few sprigs of transplanted watercress, which struggled manfully on the banks of a water-furrow for a few weeks and then joined the ranks of other overgrown giants dignified by the name of "vegetables."

In truth, the only hopeful periods in our gardening experience at M—— were those days when the post disgorged its packets of garden seeds with the tempting green "models" displayed on the covers. At such times anticipation ran high, and early-morning planting and sprinkling became an obsession. In an incredibly short time the first green leaves thrust themselves above the rich transplanted subsoil, and one could almost taste the crisp salads and cool cucumbers which would soon displace the daily "omeletty" produced with unfailing regularity by the cook.

Alas ! when the fervour of personally attending the garden nursery had lost its savour and we were content to entrust its care to the *shamba*-boy of parasol fame, a rude awakening was invariably the result. For after a three weeks' absence from the scene of our early endeavours the "garden revisited" revealed a dense growth of waist-high exotic-looking trees ; one here holding an all but invisible brussels sprout in its topmost branches ; another there supporting a full-blown cauliflower the size of a walnut, and the "delectable" salad had attained the dimensions of a mammoth cabbage with a microscopic heart held aloft in its capacious bosom.

After several attempts to impress upon the native gardener that size was not the most desirable quality of a green delicacy and that some intimation of its having attained edible proportions was in order before it began to resemble a shade-tree, we desisted from vegetable growing and depended upon the stray supplies of Mission gardens situated more favourably for normal production.

One would scarce expect a journey of two hours afoot in any other country to produce such well-defined physical contrasts as are to be met with on the slopes of Kilimanjaro, and in the matter of elevation a few hundred feet may take one from bare and colourless wastes into a green paradise of luxuriant growth, and a land abounding in honey and milk (with cream on top). Yet the lava soil of Kilimanjaro's plantation areas does not lend itself to the growing in quantity of luscious European fruits such as we found on Meru's slopes, and the dweller at the foot of the larger mountain must be content with such near-by importations as oranges, lemons and an occasional peach. Apples are an almost unheard-of luxury, and when a kind friend once sent the family a small "pippin" from the Usumbara highlands it caused a scramble for possession, from which the writer emerged with the lion's share, only to reluctantly resign it in favour of the house-dog, who in an unguarded moment made away with the major portion of our "half."

After gourmandising at A—— for two days and three nights, and being fêted and dined by the



(Upper) CAMP IN THE UNINHABITED COUNTRY

(Lower) HAUNT OF LION AND LEOPARD ROUND MOUNT MERU

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hospitable little community, we started on our exciting journey into new and untried lands.

Skirting the steeper slopes of Mount Meru on the first day's march, one could but note the similarity of the beautiful plantations below to the great fruit belt of California, with its purple foothills in the distance, although here in Africa the coffee fields replaced the young peach and apricot orchards of the Golden State, and the resemblance was confined to general contours, the nestling bungalows of the plantations set at the end of fine avenues, and the occasional glimpse of an orange grove.

For the first twelve miles we travelled over deliciously springy turf—a pleasant change from the hard, dusty paths of the lower Kilimanjaro country, but our second day's march took us again into the plains, from which both mountains rise at an altitude 1000 feet higher than our starting-point from our home station, and with beautiful views across to our own snow-crowned Kilimanjaro, now beckoning us from a distance of forty miles.

Small herds of zebra were dotted about the plain, but at too great a distance to invite one's untried skill as a sportsman, or to reveal their bizarre attractiveness, which awaited closer scrutiny.

Our second night's camp brought us within sight of a tiny Dutch settlement on one of the long slopes of Meru stretching far out into the plain between the two great mountains. The crude little houses outlined against flaming sunset skies lent a homely and comforting touch to the otherwise wild and isolated surroundings.

After camp had been made beneath the bare

branches of a huge acacia-tree, and tea had been brewed from a scanty supply of brackish water of rather questionable cleanliness, we set out on a voyage of discovery to our Dutch neighbours. The nearest "farm-house" appeared at first sight to be uninhabited, and in a most unclean and neglected condition. Our repeated knocks bringing no response other than the frightened grunts of a large family of pigs installed in the "drawing-room," we hastened away from the unsavoury odours of decaying refuse, only to have our somewhat heated comments interrupted by the apparition of the chatelaine, who raised a tousled head at us with disconcerting suddenness from the bed of the stream we were crossing.

A gaunt, unkempt female, towering some inches above my tall husband, she had been engaged in laundering what appeared to be a year's accumulation of ragged garments in the none too clean waters of the duck-pond, whose banks had effectively concealed her from sight. All fear as to her comprehension of our ill-timed criticisms was dispelled by her slow-growing smile of welcome, and we were soon chatting comfortably, exchanging views on the merits of soft versus hard soap in the laundry business.

Further conversation revealed the fact that a suckling pig might be extracted from the drawing-room supply to provide a delicacy for our next day's tinned dinner, and with the exchange of a few shillings the addition of a duckling was promised, so we departed in high hopes of a feast on the morrow. My only reward for this "surprise"

information on rejoining the *Bwana* (who had disdained being present at the feminine conference) was a laughing "Of course you *would* tell the poor thing the proper way to wash her own clothes when you've never washed so much as your own handkerchief."

The pleasure of this chance encounter was not lessened, however, by such masculine criticism, as it is well known that any exchange of views or methods, tried or untried, is a stimulant to both contending parties when they are "sisters under the skin."

For some unknown reason the *Bwana* and I were equally of the opinion that the lady of the pigs was a spinster, and between us we built up a tragic picture of her lonely struggle for an existence in this bleak and unlovely spot. Great was our surprise on visiting the neighbouring farm to be told that of the eighteen ruddy-faced children at play there, seven belonged to the adjacent piggery, and to the dauntless female on whom we had been wasting our sympathy!

The squalor and poverty of this second Dutch homestead was relieved by a most charming playground near by, where a clear sparkling brook rushed between soft green banks, shaded by a natural roof of thick interlacing acacia-trees, and here we came upon the children. One regretted that no camera was at hand to perpetuate this charming scene, for it bore all the appearance of fairyland, with a multitude of babes-in-the-wood at play.

Our sudden appearance must have been ogre-like

to these shy babies, unaccustomed to the sight of any European other than their respective parents, for they fled precipitately in opposite directions, falling over each other in their haste to regain the shelter of the "piggery" and the little mud-house on the hill.

When we reached the family abode not a child was visible, and only severe admonition by the parents and much cajolery from the visitors brought them out one by one from their hiding-places.

Here, among the poorest of the poor, was to be seen real beauty, and the exquisite colouring depicted in the canvas of a Van Dyck or Rubens.

So near of an age were these rosy-cheeked darlings that they resembled the plucked petals of a single blossom clinging shyly to each other as they clustered about the parent stem.

Little they possessed of the bare necessities of life, naught of the childish treasures cherished by more fortunate children, and one's heart ached for their poverty as well as for the beauty which was born to blush unseen.

Yet they possessed the chief requisite for childhood's happy days—freedom of the out-of-doors world, and, in particular, a group of feathery trees shading a dancing stream, a home-made swing, shared amicably by the eleven in one family with the seven in another—the great sweep of open plain stretching away to far horizons, and above the distant green belt of cool forest the towering snowy crest of Kilimanjaro.

Within a mile of the children's playground wild beasties raced the plains, and one longed to know

what fancies were bred in the heads of these Dutch babies by their strange surroundings. Surely beauty was never discovered in so unlikely a spot ; and if one could but have understood their strange patois one might have heard a new and delightful fairy-lore, born in the unspoiled imagination of these half-wild, white children of the African plains.

We learned from the parents that they had never had toys save what they made of sticks and stones, and this so wrenched our hearts that we decided, on the spot, the approaching Christmas should reveal undreamt-of treasures to these little exiles—a plan which was carried out in due season, and gave intense pleasure to our little Dutch friends as well as their parents, who shared in the spoils.

We felt rather guilty about this, as the Dutch settlement was an adjunct of our late host's district, and hence supposed to be none of our affair ; but the temptation of playing Santa Claus proved strong enough to outweigh any possible criticism of "interference," and we were to hear later of the success of our venture without any unpleasant inquiries attached.

On our departure from this diverting scene we looked forward to a "trek" on foot of some sixty miles through practically uninhabited bush country, where we must be prepared for waterless days, for a pestilence of ticks (the tiny marauder who infests tall grass and attaches himself to any portion of your anatomy affording foothold and a sanguinary repast), and for camping in the open many miles from any other human.

Only the wandering tribes of Masai, the lazy

warriors once dreaded by all other Africans, tread the scarcely discernible paths, driving their great herds of cattle over vast areas for the scanty grazing afforded below the forest.

So little water trickles over the dry river-beds of this wind-swept side of Kilimanjaro that native cultivation and habitation are impossible for many miles.

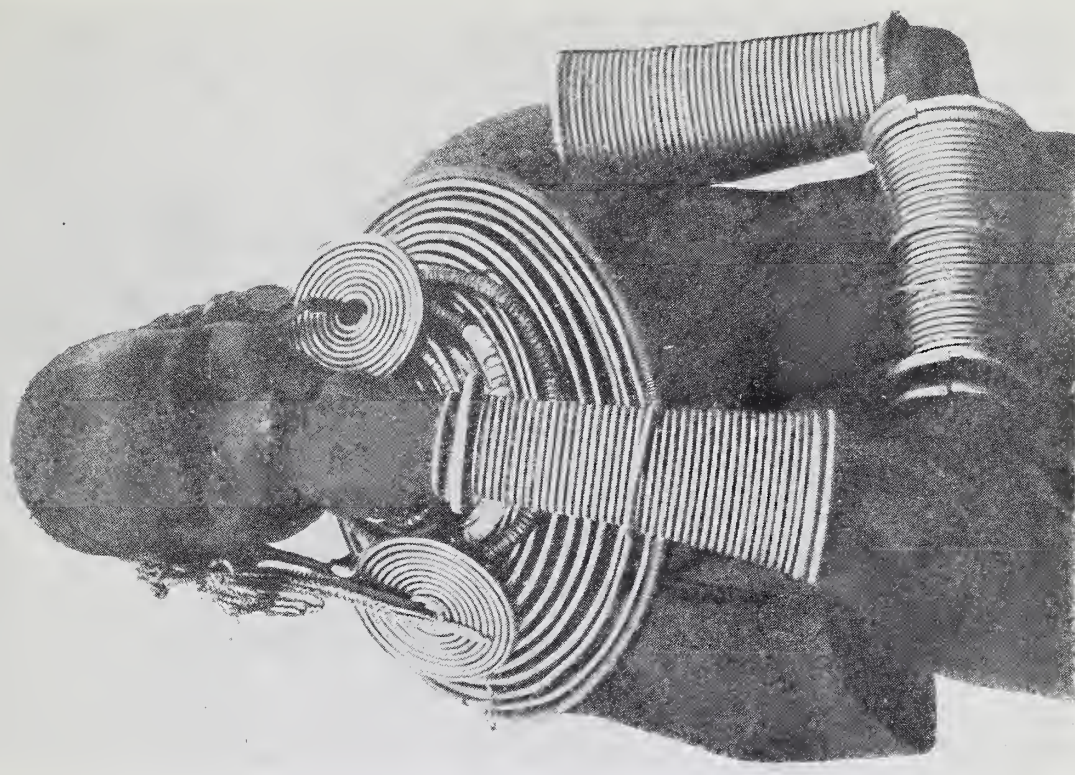
On these wide upland plains, now bearing a scanty growth of grotesque and dwarfish thorn bush, once flourished the primeval forest in all its luxury of giant trees, luscious hanging vines and orchids.

A few outposts of the original forest below the present forest-line bear witness to former possible habitation, and to the destruction done by ruthless nomads. Nominally denied access to the Government Preserved Forest, their camp-fires may yet be seen by the unexpected investigator, tell-tale wreaths of smoke rising here and there among the giant trees.

An occasional happy valley stretches its thin green arm of untouched growth downward to the edge of the vast empty plain below, but aside from these scattered threads of green, separated by many miles of open country, the landscape shows no colour save the limitless expanse of dry yellow grasses, often shoulder-high, through which passage is made more difficult by the bumps and hollows hidden in the thick roots, and offering precarious footing for porters laden with bulky head-loads. Even those who are unburdened find difficulty in keeping on their feet unless eyes are glued to the ground, and mishaps are frequent.



A YOUNG MASAI BOY WITH "PIGTAIL"



A MASAI BELLE

At the end of the fourth day's march we sought shelter from the clouds of dust left by a travelling herd of Masai cattle in a wretched camp offering no protecting shade, and only a limited supply of saltish, discoloured water—a serious proposition when one's party contains some sixty thirsty, wearied porters, and one's own dusty and foot-sore condition calls for immediate immersion in a full bath of hot water.

The memory of this unpleasant spot is very vivid, as it was here I first witnessed a Masai dance—enacted for our benefit by a band of unhealthy-looking, ugly females clothed in leather garments so heavy as to give them the appearance of dancing bears.

The only picturesque feature of the gathering was the arrival of the dancers coming in single file from several directions over the brow of the neighbouring hills, and giving the effect of long, brown streamers slowly unwinding toward a common centre, which, in this instance, was the spot on which my husband and I stood awaiting them. A weird, guttural chant kept them marching in step, and the heavy anklets and rising and falling wire necklaces on their bosoms made a not unattractive accompaniment to the “song of praise.”

These chants among all Africans with whom I came in contact recalled the two- or three-part-songs and melodies current among the religious negroes of the Southern United States, save that they lacked the fervour and swing of the “camp meeting” hymn. One line of singers was silent while another filled the air with minor notes, followed by the unison of all voices in repeated

short cries of welcome, until, finally, the streamers joined, forming a human bracelet, in the centre of which stood the rather bored *Bwana* and his sensitive-nostrilled *Bibi*, pretending to wave her handkerchief nonchalantly while in reality guarding her nose against the assailing odours of leather-encased, unwashed, human flesh. Very shortly the hymn of praise resolved itself into raucous arguments and high-voiced pleas for the ceasing of various feminine woes, to all of which the *Bwana* turned a deaf ear, as "Court" was not to be held at this hour after a strenuous day's march and arrival at a camp which had received not even the smallest attention in the way of cleaning up the refuse left by hundreds of stampeding cattle.

Here, too, we encountered our first serious difficulty with porters. It is the custom to send back to their own homes each day those who have carried the loads from the last camp, but not until after a substantial meal has been given them and as many hours' rest as they choose to take.

We were now well within the Masai country, and as it was the first visit paid them by the representative of Government since the days of German occupation they were unaware that the *Bwana's* orders were to be obeyed or penalties incurred. Meat had been promised at this camp for the native porters who had accompanied us from our last stopping-place, but no food awaited our arrival, nor were there any porters for the following day's journey, and our own men were tired and in an ugly mood.

A ragged-looking Masai chief having arrived,

with two or three shifty-eyed followers, the *Bwana* immediately demanded the meaning of this defection, and as no acceptable excuse was offered, several of our discontented porters were sent in pursuit of the herd of cattle which had lately passed, and soon arrived back with two or three great bulls, one of which was rather ungraciously presented to the camp for its evening meal.¹

This matter was scarcely settled when a cry went up that the bull had "escaped," and as he could be seen being driven rapidly away over the hills by a young Masai herdsman evidently "in the know," and as no attempt to stop him had been made by our own porters, the *Bwana* sternly ordered the confiscation of the remaining bulls. These were tethered in a near-by deserted cattle-shed where our porters were resting, and were held as hostages until the affair should be dealt with at the morrow's meeting. Meantime no meat was forthcoming for the "striking" porters. We ourselves had little food other than tinned sardines, rice and mouldy bread, so that it was a company very sorry for itself which finally sought comfort in sleep beneath the stars.

At daylight the unhappy news was brought

¹ The custom, surviving from German rule, by which native chiefs provide an animal of sorts as food for the native porters at each camp and for the Government official who comes to settle the affairs of the district, was not approved by the *Bwana*. Attempts to do away with it, however, met with strong objection from the chiefs, as they held it to be a refusal of their hospitality, and regarded non-acceptance as signifying the displeasure of the Government with its subjects.

As the natives pay many a debt, fancied or real, to their chiefs by offerings of cattle, sheep or goats, the return to them of some portion of what was once theirs has merit, in that it lessens the possibility of discontent among the chief's followers.

to our tent that one of the bulls being held for "ransom" had been strangled in the night by some of the porters—presumably out of revenge for deprivation of their usual feast, and to prevent the Mohammedan members of our household from enjoying any of the meat, as all good Mohammedans hold as unclean that which is killed by any other than one of their own faith, and will willingly starve rather than eat meat polluted by the touch of the unfaithful.

The unpleasant result of all this was that *no* one was permitted to partake of the slain beast, and it was returned to the Masai chief for the delectation of his own followers.

Later in the day fresh porters arrived from Chagga Land, bringing eggs, chickens and a young bull for their evening meal, and as our own staff had been fed as well as might be from our own scanty personal stores; we started on another journey, taking with us as prisoners the hungry porters presumably responsible for the killing of the chief's bull.

Before we reached our next camp, game was seen everywhere grazing in the plains, and our best shots were dispatched in different directions to secure something for the evening meal. Only one party succeeded in bringing anything into camp, but there was sufficient food for all; and we closed our eyes that night on a contented circle of gluttons gathered about the great camp-fire, each one with his portion of meat twisted around a forked stick, and the air filled with the savoury odours of roasting "steaks."

As everyone was very tired and rather upset over the happenings of the previous day, we decided to rest for an extra twenty-four hours before resuming our journey, and the day was given up to settling of various legal difficulties among the Masai and the "laundering" of the travel-stained clothing of the master and mistress. The house-boys on these occasions are really quite wonderful, as they succeed in a very few hours, and with the least possible equipment, in washing and pressing the entire wardrobe of the *Bwana* and his *Bibi*, as well as "reviving" their own outfit; so that the dinner-hour finds fresh clothing laid out on camp beds and hot baths waiting. No slight feat this, in the African bush. But they seldom, if ever, failed us, unless water was unobtainable.

When we broke camp the following day everyone was rested and happy, and eager to explore the wilder country beyond.

We were now in tall grass, with practically no paths to guide us, and the only signs of life were the roving cattle and the wary herds of kongoni and eland just discernible on the lower levels, where grazing was afforded.

The confusion of many diverging cattle trails did not ease the difficulty of wending our way onward toward the other side of Kilimanjaro, and the reluctantly tendered information gleaned from scattered Masai herdsmen was not to be depended upon. Hence we proceeded warily, not entirely unprepared for a sudden attack by lions should we chance to disturb them.

Our official "guide" through this vast unbroken

grass-land was a wizened old native from the Chagga country, whose belief in his infallibility was only outweighed by his utter uselessness. Again and again we lost our way amidst the maze of cattle tracks, as the district was entirely new to all of our party, and presumably to the "guide," who confessed later to having once traversed this side of the mountain some twenty years previously.

There is something eerie in travel through tall grass, with its possibilities of lurking wild beasts on every hand; but the real marauder, of whose presence we were unaware until he had "dug himself in" effectively, was the almost invisible little tick. These tiny creatures lay in wait for us on every stalk of dried grass, and the slightest brushing of garments or puttees against them brought them off in hundreds upon our clothing, where they crawled about unseen on the dusty khaki surface until an opening was found through which they might squeeze their way to the warm flesh beneath and feast on our heated blood. So firmly do they attach themselves that they can only be removed by tearing them loose from their gory feast, and the tantalising irritation of their sting remains for many days.

The *Bwana*, who was wearing wool spiral puttees, was fain to believe the heat responsible for this constant tickling sensation, but arrival in camp revealed the presence of hundreds of these infinitesimal pests, who had crept in between the edges of the tightly drawn, overlapping puttees, and had to be scraped off with a knife from the tortured flesh beneath.

Ticks were not the only unpleasant feature of this long trek through the grass country, for as the possible camping places affording even a limited supply of water were few and far between, many hours of weary stumbling over rough surfaces under a blazing sun had perforce to be endured, and to find a spot anywhere giving even slight shade which had not already been occupied by herds of cattle was well-nigh impossible.

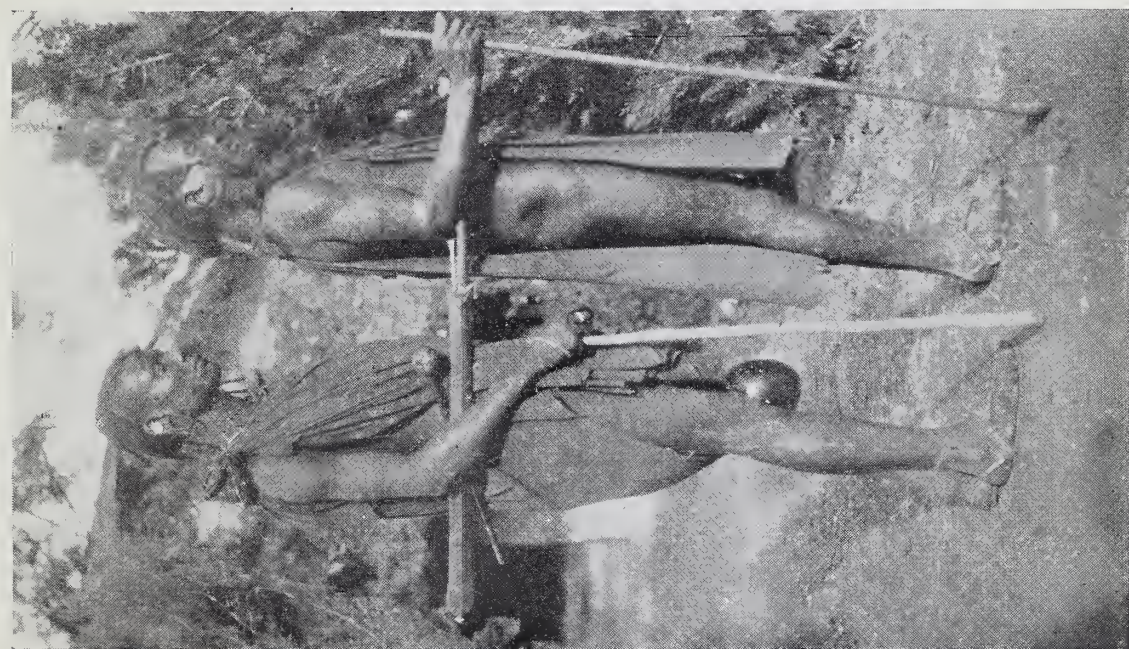
Here and there, dotting the upland plains, were seen the great thorn circles of the Masai cattle kraals, where the herds are driven nightly for safety, and where they themselves live in low mud huts along the inner wall of the enclosure, needless to say in unbelievable filth and congestion.

The Masai men are often fine-featured, with the delicately moulded hands and feet and lithe carriage of the male who does no work. The women are hard-visaged and repulsive, unwashed and fly-covered, and many of both sexes are afflicted with sore eyes from the constant dust of moving cattle ; yet they are undoubtedly among the most picturesque tribes of Africa. Until quite recently the men wore practically no clothing and went into battle unimpeded by any garment save a small piece of skin hung from the shoulders. The women, on the other hand, are so heavily laden with coverings of calf-skins as to move clumsily, and, it would seem, painfully, as their legs and arms are almost encased to the knee and elbow by spirals of iron wire. Their heads are shaven, and consequently seem far too small for the bulky, leather-clad

bodies, so giving them the appearance of an old-fashioned churn with a button-top lid.

In the days before the advent of the European Protective Government, when warfare between tribes was a constant menace to the weaker and less aggressive communities, these nomad Masai warriors were the terror of the country. That their prowess in arms was greatly overestimated has since been proven, and they are now regarded by the more progressive natives with some measure of scorn for their thriftless habits.

The fact that they, in common with a few other widely scattered African tribes, have a distinct warrior class has given added significance to their known predatory instincts, and for many years they made use of the acknowledged fear in which they were held by other tribes to attack unprotected cattle and carry off stock to augment their own flocks and herds. From these herds they derive their entire sustenance, as they live only on milk, meat and the blood of living animals, refusing to cultivate the land, or stoop to manual labour of any sort. It is their boast that they can do no work, and they never hesitate to show their scorn for those who work in the fields or carry any sort of burden. For many generations the young men of the tribe—varying in age from seventeen to thirty years—have been forced by tribal laws to live apart from their elders and submit to special discipline, with the view of developing their warlike proclivities, their use of the spear and their cunning in carrying out successful cattle-raiding for the benefit of the clan.



MASAI WARRIORS IN CHARACTERISTIC POSES

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When a young boy has reached the ceremonial age of circumcision he is received into the warrior class ; his hair is allowed to grow, and is plaited in a pigtail with red clay and ornaments ; his body is usually covered with a red ochre, and he leaves his parents' hut to take up his abode with the other segregated young bloods of the tribe. Unfortunately monastic rules do not obtain in this phase of their training, and it is a deplorable but well-known fact that Masai girls, too young for marriage, are permitted to live in the same hut with the young warriors, with resulting injury to their health and potential motherhood.

Despite the picturesque beauty of the young men, their lithe, slender bodies, their grace of movement and Adonis-like poses, one cannot but feel their degeneracy, and after several days' contact with a tribe which refused even the courtesy of directing the European on his way until disarmed and forced to do so, one was glad to breathe the more wholesome atmosphere of Chagga Land, with its cheerful, hard-working, respectful natives.

CHAPTER VI

VISITS TO THE MISSIONS AND SOME DEDUCTIONS THEREFROM

Contrasts—Missions as Health Resorts—Europeanising the Native—Difficulty of adjusting modern Religious Beliefs to ancient Tribal Customs—Mission Education—Its Limitations—Monogamy and the Missions—Labour of “Converts” on Mission Plantations—Commercial Activities of some Missions—Dangers of Familiarity between White and Black

ONE of the joys of living “up country” is the possibility of breaking the routine of station life by these mountain *safaris*, when the responsibilities of household management, with its attendant problems and vexations, may, in a three hours’ journey afoot, be exchanged for the delights and freedom of life in a tent. Equally, when one wearies of chattering natives, rubber bath tubs, and the daily packing and unpacking of camp utensils, the thought of “home” beneath a substantial iron roof, the comfortable wicker chairs on the rose-embowered verandah, and the shaded candle-light of a civilised dinner, appear doubly desirable because of the short respite from over-familiarity with their limitations.

Fortunate, indeed, are those few who may thus vary the monotony of a life so restricted in its companionships and recreations. From a health standpoint these changes are invaluable, as even an increased altitude of 1000 feet often spells the difference between exhaustion and fever and

comparative vigour, without which one is fair game for that relentless and conquering enemy—the African climate.

And herein the missions might play an important rôle not incompatible with the accepted reasons for their existence. If “Christian Service” were but interpreted in its broader meanings the health of many a European family would be rendered less precarious by a sojourn at these mountain stations of the Church.

In the Kilimanjaro country the missions’ sites seem to have been selected with a divining rod, so beautiful, cool and refreshing are they to the dwellers in the bush country below. Oases of green waving trees, flourishing coffee fields bordered and shaded by rows of golden “grevillea,” feathery larches, rich upland pastures watered by sparkling rivulets from the glaciers above, and, nestling in the shelter of soldierly pines and hemlocks, the groups of comfortably built, substantial houses, several of which have fallen into disuse.

The writer was one of the fortunate few permitted to invade these health resorts of the Church, and entertains the deepest feelings of gratitude to the Roman Catholic fathers who opened their doors to her when convalescing from repeated illnesses.

Yet one must, in justice to one’s convictions, view individual kindnesses apart from the general attitude of the missions; and while entertaining a strong personal regard for my mountain hosts, certain aspects of mission activity in other parts of the district have so impressed themselves upon

me that I feel bound to touch—as lightly as may be—on so vital a movement in African life.

The missions of Central Africa are not Government-controlled, save in the initial instance of their approved entry into the country, and in cases where mission activity is openly expressed as antagonistic to Government policy ; hence the unofficial observer may be permitted to set forth her casual impressions without fear of *lèse-majesté*.

Whatever weakness the missions seem to evince in cementing the relations of the convert to the Government is offset by the strength with which they cement him to the outward forms of Europeanisation. Perhaps it is not for the mere onlooker to judge how far this Europeanisation alienates the native from good citizenship. One is, however, led to believe that mission teaching in all its ramifications must, if accepted without reservations by the native, undermine his belief in the tribal customs and traditions which are respected and obeyed by his fellows. In embracing Christianity and observing the letter of its law he necessarily repudiates the faith of his forefathers, and thus estranges himself from his tribe.

This estrangement often leads to rebellion against the orders of the chief or constitutional head of each tribe, and the native convert often uses his religious “convictions” as a reason for refusal to conform to tribal laws which are recognised and upheld by the British Government. Hence it is that the native Christian who defies the authority of his chief defies also that of the European Government,

and such obstreperous Christians, and *only* such, are classed as undesirable citizens.

So far the policy of the British Government toward its black subject races has been to exert its influence through the duly constituted tribal chiefs, without undue interference with native laws and customs which have been in use for many centuries. Far from tearing down the fabric of Africanism the protecting mother country has spread her arms understandingly over the ancient faith and customs of her adopted children, and in this policy of tolerance may be found much imagined antagonism to the misdirected political influence of the missions.

That there are possibilities of antagonism between the two forces is not surprising ; the one standing for the building up of an efficient, self-governing nation on the lines of the well-tried system of chiefship and allegiance thereto, and the other unconsciously tending to alienate the Christian from his traditions and his unconverted brethren, and thus unintentionally weakening the machinery of tribal government.

It is thus seen that while the Government may be in sincere sympathy with the religious aspect of mission work, there exists the strongest grounds for control of mission activity in other respects.

The very reason for mission existence throughout the world is supposedly to " spread the Gospel among the heathen " : for that specific purpose they are given financial support from the home Church, and are granted every facility, with little supervision by, or interference from, their official

governing body at home. But when the missionary attempts to become an arbiter in outside affairs he not only cuts a sorry figure, but is sowing the seeds of inestimable mischief and revolution.

The majority of missions are situated in the heart of native-inhabited areas, where, in theory, the native is to be allowed to live in his own way, and to enjoy his traditional habits of thought and practice. Hence the mission, with its instinctive combating of all these privileges as hostile to the accepted view of Christianity, is looked upon by the unconverted native as the centre of heresy and agitation.

When to this opposition of tribal freedom is added insidious though well-meant attack on their social institutions and political organisations, the interference of the mission becomes an offence against the native which the Government cannot countenance, and in such instances official correction and intervention become essential for the peace of the community.

Many missionaries are, unfortunately, men and women of narrow views, limited education and little experience of life, drawn from obscure and parochial surroundings by a "call" to preach the Gospel in foreign lands.

When these men and women, whose views have received little or no consideration in their own country, suddenly find themselves transported to a new land, where they are free to follow any line of conduct dictated by their own consciences, and to dispense broadcast any theories they may entertain, unrestricted by the supervision, advice and

control of a local, parent organisation, they are often led to meddle in temporal affairs of whose magnitude they have no conception. They thus become a source of unrest in the native community, and are properly looked upon at least as a nuisance, and possibly a menace, to the local government.

On the other hand, the educational facilities provided by the missions are, properly used, of inestimable value to the native, and this phase of mission activity is given every possible encouragement by the local authorities.

Government funds for the establishment and maintenance of parochial schools are, unfortunately, entirely inadequate to the needs of the country—the Budget of 1921-1922 allocated only about £3000 for this crying need. In a country inhabited by some 4,000,000 intelligent and willing natives such a sum allotted annually for school building and supplies is ridiculously insufficient, and if the future of the African native is to be evolved from his education, there must be a noticeable multiplication of the pounds, shillings and pence granted for this purpose.¹

The native of average intelligence acquires the rudiments of education in far less time than is required by the civilised child of cultured parents. Many who have had but a few weeks' schooling can read fluently, and write more legibly than the average European adult. This may be accounted for by the fact that the uncivilised child plays an active part from babyhood in the division of family labour, using the cunning with which Nature

¹ The Budget for 1924 has increased this amount to £9000.

endows her wild children to search out and capture his food, locate wood for his fire and fodder for his cattle; and this sharpening of all the faculties necessary for the preservation of life naturally fosters his intelligence, and makes him quicker in his grasp of essentials than the pampered child of civilisation. The great pity is that so few can enjoy the privilege of secular education. Mission teaching is mainly given as a means for conversion, and as such does not fulfil the cardinal object of mental training, that of expanding native mentality.

The Roman Catholic Missions, which, one must confess, are far better conditioned and officered than the Protestant, naturally lay stress on the Latin service, and here in school and church one hears several hundred children and adult natives reading the Latin and Swahili prayers and chants with equal and incredible facility.

But the task of educating the native to a better understanding of his own language and customs, giving him a deeper insight into his own delightful lore, revealing to him the dignity of ancient tribal custom, and, above all, imbuing him with a sense of responsibility, opening for him the vision of a higher native civilisation, attainable through use and development of his latent powers—these are left practically untouched by the mission school-master.

Mere ability to read and write in the native language and sing hymns is not a sufficient attraction to the keen-minded African child to keep him a willing pupil in any school more than a few days of the year, and once he has mastered the

rudimentary knowledge imparted by the mission schoolmaster he has no further use for the school.

What a virgin field lies here for the educational theorist and experimentalist in child psychology ! Were there a Pestalozzi or a Froebel to raise his voice in black Africa, to insist on the need of educating the child through his own activity and environment, and to evolve a system of education for the black based on an intimate study and knowledge of his traditions, his occupations and his aspirations, how far-reaching might be the results in reclaiming the vast numbers of coloured peoples on the Dark Continent, and fitting them to take their place eventually as valued citizens of the world.

Statistics for the year 1907 in the United States of America give the expenditure for free education of the masses at twice the amount allotted for annual expense of army and navy, or, to use a more homely comparison, at "one and one-fourth times the amount expended yearly on our consumption of coffee and sugar." If all the zealous supporters of the Foreign Mission movement were to deny themselves the daily luxury of these two named commodities and subscribe an equivalent amount to the comprehensive, secular education of the "heathen," for whose "enlightenment" they offer daily prayer, black Africa might speedily become white Africa, so far as its awakened intelligence and usefulness are concerned.

One does not wish a Europeanised Africa in any sense of the word. The conviction of many conscientious students of native life is that the nearer

the native is kept to his African traditions, in their highest aspects, the better native he will be, and that his education should be toward a greater understanding of, and respect for, the customs and ancient laws on which true Africanism must be based if he is to emerge from ignorance to a realisation of his capabilities. Even to encourage the native to ape the European in manner, dress or speech is equally to weaken his potentiality as a good citizen of his own country ; and herein the missions are, generally speaking, at fault—particularly those of the Protestant Church.

In their great zeal to make apparent the numbers of Protestant converts, and thus justify their existence to the non-missionary element, they seem to encourage the wearing of European apparel by their satellites—native schoolmasters, girls and women attached to the mission for one reason or another ; elders, deacons, and all those Christians who have been elected to the various offices of the Church. This attempt to appear “converted,” and hence Europeanised in the cast-off clothing of the white man, or even in the best efforts of the local, native tailor, can but produce a ridiculous native, robbed of all his seeming cleanliness of person and dignity of bearing.

At one mission were proudly exhibited a group of *totos* from the orphanage clothed in “Buster Brown” calico suits, donated by an enthusiast from Detroit. Now the African *toto* is reared on the principle of “the greater the stuffing the more honoured the stuffer” ; hence a small black child with generous parents boasts of a protruding

stomach worthy of a Falstaff. The modest Detroit costumes were not planned for the African contour, and could be adjusted to the strangely formed little black bodies only by turning them "hind side before," thus allotting to the honourable "tummy" the fullness designed for the plump seat of the little American boy. This led to many complications, particularly as the treasures in one's breast-pocket (now in the centre of one's back) were more available to one's neighbour than to oneself, and a sitting posture was assumed with grave danger to the delicate Detroit fabric.

Mission girls—young converts who attend all services and work at the missions in some capacity, domestic or agricultural—wear the prescribed Christian habit, a hideous belted "Mother Hubbard," usually turkey-red in colour, and reaching to the ground, hampering their natural grace of movement, and not infrequently giving forth the unpleasant odour of the much-worn and seldom-washed garment.

It is an undisputed fact that human flesh bears more frequent scrubbing than a cheap, coloured print, or a near-wool tailored suit. The African, wearing a loose cotton cloth falling from shoulder to knee, seldom passes a stream without stopping to bathe—a natural proceeding, unattended by any sense of immodesty in undressing. He sits by the stream, raises his cloth, dashes the cool, refreshing water over his perspiring body, lowers his drapery, and continues his scarcely interrupted journey. The native costume for a woman is a trifle more complicated, as it consists of a tightly bound waist-

cloth reaching to knees or ankles, and a second, secured by a cunning twist under the arms, leaving them free to adjust her heavy head-burden and serving as a balance to her long, even stride. Even this superabundant costuming is no deterrent to her cleanliness, as she removes the upper cloth and bathes as freely and unnoticed as her black brother.

The supply of cast-off garments, "dress lengths," battered boots and shapeless hats donated from the abandoned wardrobe of well-meaning supporters of Foreign Missions must be insufficient for the needs even of the African native who toils in the field, whose labour is always of the body, necessitating the free use of water, and as little contact as possible with his clothing. The false modesty which thus teaches him to shut in his body from the fresh air, and adopt an ill-fitting European dress (of which he probably possesses but one), gives him a questionable distinction among his more sanitary, if unconverted, brothers and sisters. One must in honesty add that the desire to wear European clothing is not confined to the mission class of native. It is only that the Christian comes more closely in contact with the European in mission life than in secular; and whereas the missions as a rule encourage this outward Europeanisation of the faithful, the European Government official will in all instances discountenance any such tendency on the part of the native population as a whole. Forbid it he cannot; but if every European in the Church or out were to discourage the denationalising of the natives in all matters, even the so seemingly unimportant one of dress, all classes

would be working together toward one and the same end.

One of the vital points insisted upon by the missions is that the convert shall have but one wife, and here they strike at the very heart of tribal law and custom.

To possess but one wife in Africa is to the native the mark of supreme poverty, for by the number of his wives and children is he judged to be of economical value in his community.

The woman in Africa represents prosperity and property. The man who woos her not only pays the father a substantial dowry in cattle, sheep or goats, but the woman in turn brings to his hut her marriage gifts of cattle, and her ability to do the lighter work of the fields, which she considers a task worthy of her dignity and matronhood.

The woman herself has no desire to be the only wife; she gladly welcomes each new recruit to the matrimonial fold as a means of lessening her own labours, and adding to the family riches in children and cattle, thus increasing the importance of the household in the community.

It may be readily seen that by forcing monogamy on the native Christian the number of converts will of necessity remain ridiculously small in comparison with the vast native population which remains loyal to the ancient custom on which its strength is founded. One is led to consider seriously what would become of the surplus women in Africa should the male population, as a whole, embrace Christianity and hence monogamy. The numbers of women predominate over the men to

the extent of 30 per cent. in some districts, while an average of 10 to 15 per cent. may be taken as the existing surplus of female over male.

The African woman attains value and dignity chiefly through marriage and the number of her children, and in no country in the world is motherhood held more sacred, or treated with so great honour.

Is it to be expected that the million of surplus women will content themselves with that unknown state, spinsterhood, for which they are wholly unfitted, both from a sexual and social viewpoint? This is one of the questions which must ever affect the growth and influence of Christianity in Africa, and unless the Church finds it possible to tolerate the native viewpoint on plurality of marriage, as well as to show some generosity and consideration toward their ancient laws and customs, Christianity must remain very much at its present stage of development.

Conversion may have its dangers as well as its blessings. "Backsliding" is worse than pure Paganism in its moral effects, and is no less infrequent among religious enthusiasts than among European zealots; but when the native convert finds it impossible to live up to the demands of the acquired religion, or when it interferes with his ordered, tribal life to his economical detriment, he is apt to discard it, only to find he has naught to aid him in the straight and narrow path. Generally speaking, it is an open question as to how much of the new religion is actually understood by the native. Its outward form, particularly the more

picturesque service of the Roman Catholic Church, appeals quite naturally to his love of pageantry. He thoroughly enjoys long hymns and chants, and wears his "silver" badge of conversion about his neck much as he would a magic charm to ward off the evil predicted by the local witch-doctor.

In his own Pagan myths one finds the counterpart of much Biblical lore: the Creation, the Flood, the visitation of pests and the miracles of the New Testament all appear in one form or another as part of his Pagan traditions, and hence are accepted readily by the convert when presented as part of the Christian faith; but a very grievous stumbling-block is found in the Biblical conception of Heaven as a last home of those spirits who have embraced the teachings of Christ, and acknowledge allegiance to Him only.

Ancestor worship enters so largely into the native, tribal customs that to willingly acknowledge conversion to a religion which does not admit one's Pagan forbears into its paradise is to remove oneself irremediably from the family circle and its attendant benefits.

One may well ask why—with so little encouragement from the vast native population, and faced with the necessarily neutral attitude of the Government official—the missionary persists in his attempts to Christianise an indifferent, if not hostile, nation.

If the missionary be satisfied with the mere scratching of the surface of heathendom—a moral vaccination which may or may not prove effective when beset by the germs of Pagan superstition and the traditions of centuries: if he feels his goal is

attained when the spiritually inoculated can repeat the prayers of the Church and remember to differentiate between "N or M" when engaged upon the Shorter Catechism, then only may he congratulate himself on having brought "enlightenment" to his particular section of this vast nation steeped in Paganism.

To the casual student of native life there is something vital of sympathy, of understanding, of toleration, lacking in the present-day missionary in Africa. Yet here, too, one's prejudice must be softened by the fact that while the missionary in Africa may, to all appearances, be acting on his own initiative with perfect liberty of conscience, he may, on the other hand, feel bound to follow the narrow traditions held by the central organisation at home, on whose moral support (and in the case of the Protestant missionary, financial support as well) he is dependent.

The Church universal was amazed at its impotence during our recent world war, when man's faith in divine aid and its shaping of his ends was shaken to its foundations. The religious beliefs unquestioningly professed by Christians throughout the world were of little avail in the face of wanton destruction, selfishness, lust and implacable hate, the abyss which engulfed thirty million tortured souls, and left its impress upon all mankind for a century to come.

In the attempted readjustment of a riven world, is it too much to hope that the Church itself must eventually sacrifice man-made creed to the broader needs of humanity? If the aboriginal tribes of the

earth are to take their place in the general advance of mankind through the civilising influence of the Church, the Christianity offered them must be a wide-flung mantle of sympathy and toleration, a religion which is not a drastic invasion of ancient ideals and customs of the native, but one which will retain and develop the best of his instincts, and gradually wean him from such ideals as are fundamentally opposed to the Christian belief.

In viewing the condition of a few of the African missions of to-day one cannot but admire the more the work of the pioneers who devoted their lives to unravelling the problems of Pagan superstition, attempting through years of arduous study and observation to arrive at some neutral ground where, apparently, hostile beliefs and customs could be reconciled with modern views of Christianity.

A few of the American missionaries now entering the country as representatives of the Protestant Church are apparently possessed of some private means and fair education. They wear good clothing, are supplied with many comforts unknown to the pioneer missionaries who faced every hardship, and even death itself, in the very districts where the present-day missionary lives under the protection of a stable Government, and among friendly and well-disciplined tribes.

Yet the part they play in the actual progress of the country, or the real advancement of the native along secular lines, is negligible.

The Roman Catholic missions have at various times made some attempt at instruction in ordinary handicraft: carpentry, etc.; but as the mission

houses are the chief beneficiaries of this labour, the ultimate good achieved by desultory employment is questionable, as interest in the natives' productivity usually ceases when he has completed the furnishings of church or mission. After immediate needs are supplied little or no attempt is made to utilise these valuable natives as a nucleus for a training school of wider scope. The trained native usually drops back into his former lazy life, a trifle more sophisticated from contact with European directors, but otherwise uninfluenced by his opportunity.

While the Government, on the one hand, aids the native in every way to increase his agricultural output, by distribution of seed, instruction in ploughing and securing of markets for his crops, the Roman Catholic missions, situated in the very heart of the native agricultural districts, do little or nothing to encourage the native to augment his produce, and look askance on the growing of coffee in native *shambas* as a source of possible danger to their own flourishing crops through coffee disease.

The Protestant missions make no pretence of interest in agriculture, either for themselves or for the native, although they are surrounded by ample acreage of rich and well-watered lands in the most productive sections of the mountain. Possibly the fact that Protestant missionaries are nominally supported entirely by home society funds is responsible for their apathy in this respect.

The Catholic missions, on the other hand, are not only self-supporting, but are expected to contribute



(Upper) A MOUNTAIN MISSION

(Lower) A MISSION BRIDE AND ATTENDANTS

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to the general funds of the Church through the output of their coffee fields. Hence, with the best intention on their part, there is apt to creep in a somewhat commercial spirit, which jars with the otherwise benevolent and disinterested work of the priests.

Many of the padres are hard-working and zealous in religious supervision of their "flock." Visitation of the sick, administering of the communion, extreme unction and so forth are undertaken at all hours of the day and night, and in all conditions of weather, but side by side with the interest in the daily services and augmentation of church membership (which in turn augments the offerings to the Mother Church) is the cultivation and marketing of the output from their own plantations, in which are employed many children and adult Christians, whose labour is inexpensive. The mission schools minister also to the agricultural needs of the mission, pupils attending two or three days a week during the planting season, and working in the mission fields the remainder. Actual school terms are generally confined to the rainy season, when little coffee cultivation is possible, and when the fewest number of children can attend because of inclement weather.

This means that educational facilities are offered for only nine to twelve weeks of the year, and chiefly to young children learning to read and write Swahili, and chant the Catholic religious services. Doubtless the disciplinary effect is of value to the growing native child, as well as the personal contact with the kindly priests. The advantage of even

the most rudimentary instruction must be obvious in a country of unawakened intelligence such as is Africa.

The pity is that the good work must cease at this point, and no opportunity be afforded for further development of those keen little minds along lines which would awaken their sense of responsibility to themselves and their race.

As an example of thrift and economy the Roman Catholic missions are to be congratulated. There is no doubt that the intelligent adult Christian is impressed by the well-kept, flourishing coffee fields through which he walks to the mission mass, and in which he, or his children, have at some time or other been labourers ; but as his banana groves are surrounded on all sides by the far-reaching plantations of the Greeks and Czecho-Slovakians, credit may be divided among them for their influence on his latent commercial instincts. Be that as it may, the Christian native is as keen as his Pagan brother in seizing the opportunity recently afforded by Government of raising his own coffee, and as it is chiefly through this medium that the mountain native may eventually become an asset of untold value to himself, one must render due thanks to the mission for its unconscious influence, and such blame as may be accorded them for lack of enthusiasm in the advance of the native along industrial lines may well be laid at the door of the Mother Church, which makes heavy demands upon their ingenuity in supplying her revenues.

It is unfortunate that any organisation representing Christianity, as opposed to Paganism,

should be forced into this dual rôle of producers for revenue and dispensers of religious truths, for the African native is quick to sense the mixture of commercialism and Christianity, and be wary of that which is undertaken, directly or indirectly, for gain. Indeed, missionaries are prone to insist on some such doctrine. The Jesuitical theory, "the end justifies the means," is one that is calculated to entrap the philanthropist, and the reputation of missions among the mass of natives has rather suffered because too much latitude has been allowed in mission affairs temporal.

The enforcement of compulsory labour under the German regime formerly benefited the mission in equal degree with the planter, and therewith the missionary appeared too much in the light of a task-master—a rôle which contrasted ill with his professed benevolent intentions. Nor was the native capable of drawing a fine distinction between compulsory labour and work done by mission pupils in return for free education.

Even such a charitable institution as the Mission Orphanage came to be misjudged on account of work performed by the orphans or motherless children, who, in actual fact, would in many cases have been left to die of neglect but for the missions.

Advantage may or may not have been taken of the special privileges of missionaries as employers, but they have certainly not always been careful enough to eliminate misunderstandings on this account. Such are inevitable when they are involved in practical money-earning concerns. Here and there they figure too prominently as plantation

owners at the expense of their higher calling, and are bound to come into conflict with the material side of native life.

It is a convenient arrangement for the school children to be employed on the mission plantations, but it leads too easily to the assumption that the latter is the real object, and education the bait or reward only.

More especially was this system ill-judged when mission school attendance was made compulsory, or, at least, was strongly urged by the authorities.

There is, under Mandatory Government, no compulsory education in East Africa, nor can there be until the Government is in a position to offer education to all natives. Equally, compulsory labour has been abolished since German rule vanished, save in the case of convicted criminals.

A certain number of days in the year the native has, by recognised tribal law, to work for his chief : also, when necessary and within prescribed limits, he may be required to work for the Government, as, for instance, carrying a load from one day's official camp to another. Usually he offers willingly, because of the feast of meat at the journey's end, but otherwise it is left entirely to his own discretion to hire out his labour or not as he pleases.

His greater independence under British rule has naturally reacted on the mission sphere and affected mission interests, with resulting slight friction. But ultimately the missions may be expected to benefit by the removal of misconceptions which undermined their standing and reputation in the judgment of the native.

More harmful has been another material advantage conceded by the German Government to mission societies—namely, the grant of extensive lands in areas where the native population has increased, until a real land hunger has come into being. It is unfortunate that such lands were granted in the most populous districts in order that the missions might have ample scope for their religious endeavours. The alienating of land being the chief cause of grievance against the white man, wherever productive land is not plentiful, likewise tends to create a conflict between missions and native interests, and to distinguish the missionary all too little from those who professedly come to seek pecuniary gain in Africa.

The conclusion seems to be that the missions, in order to retain the goodwill and respect of the native population, should avoid being involved in remunerative pursuits. Comments such as these should not arouse the resentment of their supporters, but should rather encourage them to liberal pecuniary support of the Foreign Missions, knowing that only by being freed from the necessity of raising funds on the spot can they avoid misrepresentation. On the other hand, a mission starved for funds will not give that picture of superior prosperity and mode of living which the native should have before him as an example to strive after. In this respect mission stations vary greatly. Generally speaking, the Roman Catholic mission residences, churches and school-houses are among the finest in the country. Designed and built under supervision of lay brothers, with

cheap native labour, which may even be given gratuitously from religious zeal, and with stone and timber donated by the native chief, it is not surprising that they are superior in appearance to the ordinary civilian home, for which materials at least are obtained at fabulous prices.

Not a few of these buildings display a skill of workmanship little short of marvellous, and the altars and pulpits of carved wood or stone in the various churches might well be the envy of many a European organisation. Practically all of the furniture for the personal use of the missionary is made by native carpenters from a very beautiful and enduring timber, called *m'vuli*, resembling a finely grained brown mahogany, which is obtained from the giant trees of the forest reserve.

Despite the enforcement of minor regulations by the new Government, and a somewhat more rigid scrutiny of the mission activities and privileges than was exercised heretofore, the African missionary in these parts lives a life comparatively free of discomfort. As the Kilimanjaro missions are situated in the most healthful localities of each district (away from fever and insect pests), they are often the envy of the less fortunate European official families, who gaze up longingly from the heat and dust of the mosquito-infested Government station to the cool green of the mission plantations one to two thousand feet above them in superb isolation. Apropos of which a General in the recent East African campaign, noting the superior situation of the mission stations, remarked that "the

souls of the heathen on the mountain seemed more precious than those of the plains."

Before coming to Africa the wife of the average Protestant missionary will have had to attend to her own housework, while here she will probably never lift her hand to manual labour. If converts do not gladly offer their services to her household she will be provided with three or four Christian "house-boys," and a cook, at an infinitesimal wage, and the lady of the house will never have to rise from her chair to fetch her own thimble, for the African house-boy supplies every need, short of a lady's maid, intelligently and willingly.

Vegetables and fruit of great variety grow with little urging the year round at the higher altitudes. Meat is ridiculously cheap—less than a shilling per pound for "home-grown" beef or mutton; chickens cost one shilling each; eggs, more or less fresh, are delivered at one halfpenny each; and oranges and bananas grow profusely at most mountain stations. Dwellers on the plain have to content themselves with imported Californian products, costing four to six shillings per tin, and occasional gifts from more fortunately situated friends.

It is questionable if the majority of missionaries could eke out a living in any other profession, as few are equipped for the modern struggle for existence and competition in business: hence the Protestant missionary in Africa is to be regarded as a super-fortunate individual of his class; a man of abundant leisure, with living for himself and family provided, with practically no effort on his

part, and conditions of life far superior to those he could command at home.

One must admit that the Roman Catholic missions, far more than the Protestant, are officered by men of good mental calibre, who have obtained their education in the Church universities of the Continent, and have been nurtured in the older centres of civilisation. There is in the dignified bearing of these Catholic padres something which commands the respect of the native, and is a far more potent influence on his manners and morals than the easy familiarity adopted by a few missionaries of the Protestant persuasion. It is not necessary to embrace a black man or slap him on the back to gain his interest, and it has yet to be proven that failure to recognise the colour line is of advantage. Yet the first public act of a newly arrived Protestant missionary was to have himself photographed with his arms about the shoulders of two of his native converts, the photograph to be sent to the supporting society at home as evidence of the friendly relations established between missionary and pupil.

When one realises that there are some four million blacks in Tanganyika, entirely without education in its accepted sense, only one degree removed from conditions of absolute savagery, and that the affairs of these millions are placed in the hands of some twenty-two white officials responsible for the maintenance of law and order, one must question seriously the advisability of imbuing the black man with a sense of equality with his white rulers.

For many centuries it was an accepted fact that power to rule belonged by right to those nations which had some background of learning and enlightenment. If, in our latter day, these ancient beliefs have been cast aside as a useless fetish let us not endanger the future of the African races by the experiments and upheavals which are disturbing the white nations of civilisation. Rather let our efforts on behalf of the black man be toward that enlightenment and education which may give him recognition by the white races, without establishing familiar relations with him in his present mental condition, which can only be a deterrent to his further ambition and progress, as well as a breaking down of the invaluable wall of respect for intellectual superiority.

CHAPTER VII

AFRICA'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN, AND AN ATTEMPT TO ASCEND IT

The Mona Lisa of Equatorial Africa—Its Discovery in 1848—Physical Contours—Game Plains—Bush Country—Coffee Plantations and Greek Settlement—Irrigation—The Snow-line and Glaciers—Our Attempted Ascent—Sunrise at 14,000 Feet—The Real Exploration and Success

THE monotony of our comparatively isolated life in Africa was greatly relieved by proximity to one of that country's most inexhaustible treasures, the magnificent snow-clad Mount Kilimanjaro.

So potent an influence was it in our everyday life that instinctively one's waking thoughts were focused upon it, and one's first conscious act was to reach for the field-glasses and search eagerly for some hitherto undiscovered beauty which would reveal itself with the new-born day. And in reverence and gratitude for this feast of beauty one must honestly state that never did that mighty mountain host disappoint us.

To those who have never seen a gigantic mountain of snow rising from the heart of tropical plains the pearl of Equatorial Africa must seem one of the great mysteries of nature. After two years' familiarity with it one is still inclined to ask, "Where did it come from, and why is it here?"

Because of its splendid isolation from any mountain range, its kingly height of nearly 20,000 feet, the variety of its vegetation, and its enormous

gleaming ice dome against tropical, azure skies, Kilimanjaro reigns almost supreme among the great volcanic mountains of perpetual snow. Lest one offend one adds hastily that the sister colony of British East Africa boasts a fair rival to Kilimanjaro in Mount Kenia, also snow-capped, aloof, of volcanic origin, and beautiful formation, but as its height is some 2500 feet less than Kilimanjaro's topmost peak, and the greater part of its base rests on a plain of 6000 feet elevation above sea-level, Kilimanjaro bears well the test of comparison with its lesser neighbour.

Fujiyama, the jewel of Japan, as viewed from the sea, is the nearest little sister to Kilimanjaro in its aloofness and sweeping contours, but as it reaches a height of only 12,395 feet as compared to Kilimanjaro's 19,780 feet, and wears its snowy head-dress only during the winter season, one is still of the opinion, after seeing these three singularly beautiful mountains, that the Mona Lisa of Equatorial Africa stands alone in its inscrutability, its contrasts of beauty and its physical domination of the vast area stretching from its foot to the shores of the Indian Ocean, two hundred and twenty-five miles distant.

That such a marvellous note in nature could have remained unsung for thousands of centuries is one of its greatest mysteries, for until the year 1848 the existence of Kilimanjaro was unknown to the world. In that year a pioneer missionary, named Rebmann, travelling by caravan in slow stages from the coast to the interior, and bent only on carrying the Gospel to the savages of Central

Africa, made the discovery of the mountain, recording in his diary simply that "the summit seemed covered by what looked like a beautiful white cloud. When I inquired as to the dazzling whiteness the guide merely called it 'cold,' and at once I knew it could be neither more nor less than snow."

On a later trip in the same year he notes that "at night the grand old head of the snow-capped mountain could be seen gleaming like silver in the bright moonlight." Yet the publication of this truthful report was greeted with derision by a noted geographer of the day, Mr W. Desborough Cooley, who labelled the discovery of Rebmann as a "most delightful mental recognition not supported by the evidence of the senses."

As other explorers and scientists, chiefly Germans, added the "evidence of their senses" and statistics as to the relative height, position and characteristics of the mountain they had visited in the years following Rebmann's discovery, the scoffing geographer was obliged, reluctantly, to withdraw his condemnation of the simple missionary who had directed the eyes of the world to the wonders of Kilimanjaro; not, however, until he himself had become an object of ridicule by his malignant attacks upon the character as well as the testimony of those who had followed Rebmann's footsteps. His last attempt at satirical criticism aimed at Vanderdecken's account of "perpetual snowfields beneath the tropical sun of midsummer" met with a prompt and unanswerable response, as Vanderdecken was decorated by the Royal



KILIMANJARO WITH A CLOUD WREATH

Geographical Society for his scientific additions to the world's knowledge.

The actual ascent of the mountain to its utmost height has been officially recorded to the credit of but six persons, although some twenty others (including one intrepid German female) have reached the break in the crater wall and looked upon its giant crevasses and melting snows. So far as is known only one flag has been planted on the actual crest of the crater's rim, and that by the German explorer, Meyer, who accomplished the arduous feat successfully in September 1889, after several failures, and named the small black-pointed rock, which pushes its head 150 feet above the crater wall, the "Kaiser Wilhelm Spitze."

Actually there are two peaks to Kilimanjaro, separated by a rocky saddle plateau some eight miles in length, but to dwellers on the direct north or south flanks of the mountain but one is visible, either gigantic "Kibo," with its colossal dome of perpetual ice and snow, reaching downward from the summit to 14,750 feet, or the lower jagged peak of "Mawenzi," torn and riven into a thousand fantastic pinnacles, and towering above the hot dry northern plains to a height of 16,750 feet.

Viewed from a distance of one hundred and fifty miles Mawenzi sinks into comparative insignificance before the greater splendour of Kibo's hoary head, but seen from a less distance, and from the side nearest Mawenzi, the latter holds one spell-bound with its sheer menacing savagery of outline. Viewed from the Rombo plains it stretches great claw-like fingers straight into the heavens, seeming

to call on all the powers that be, above or below, to bear witness to its naked strength.

The native legend explaining the ragged character of Mawenzi runs somewhat like this :

One day Mawenzi's fire having gone out he went to Kibo, whom he found grinding dry bananas in a great mortar. " Good-day, sir ! " cried Mawenzi, " my fire has gone out, and I have naught with which to cook my food ; could you give me of yours ? " Kibo returned his greeting, and gladly gave ember from his own fire, together with some bananas. Mawenzi departed laden with his gifts, but, thinking to play a joke on sombre Kibo, put out the fire he had been given and quickly returned for more. Kibo greeted him less warmly than on the first occasion, but again gave him fire and more bananas. Mawenzi again extinguished his embers and returned a third time to annoy the great giant with his request for fire, and at this the irate Kibo raised the massive pestle with which he had been pounding his bananas and smote Mawenzi on the head.

This native legend accounting for the jagged appearance of Mawenzi's peak strangely enough corresponds to the accepted geological explanation of the formation of the two peaks.

Mawenzi, the more ancient of the two, was formerly a great volcanic mass of ice and snow, torn by many eruptions, until a final upheaval found a new vent—at the point where Kibo now rises—and built up this colossus. These greater upheavals in turn shattered the crater of the older peak and put out his " fire " for ever, leaving only

a ragged skeleton of the once mighty mountain of Mawenzi.

Volcanic action ceased long ago, and even cursory exploration by authoritative geologists is of such recent date as to leave the history of this wonder of Equatorial Africa shrouded in obscurity.

Kibo still retains a well-defined crater, hidden from all eyes save of those few who have mastered its secret and stood upon the rim, there to gaze awestruck upon the massive ridges of ice and crumpled rock which cover the crater floor, 650 to 700 feet below.

Mawenzi's bare and jagged pinnacles are far too steep to retain snow and ice for any length of time, and the altitude of the gentler slopes is below the line of perpetual snow; hence only the ledges and crevices of the peak carry a powdering of winter's mantle during the cold season of the tropics; while the great ice dome of Kibo stretches fearlessly towards the fierce tropical sun, unchallenged through the centuries as the highest point in the African continent, and perhaps the greatest single mountain of perpetual snows in the world.

There are six distinct zones of vegetation clothing the mountain sides, whose base at the level of the plains measures roughly one hundred and twenty-five miles in circumference. These dry dusty plains, offering so sharp a contrast to the green folds and ridges of the lower levels of the great mountain, are the playground for wild game of every description—herds of hartebeeste, zebra and giraffe are to be seen in great numbers by the traveller by rail from the coast to Uganda. Lions

and leopards are frequent marauders in the *shambas* (plantations) of the natives, where they prey upon the antelope, buffalo and wild pig, which come in search of food ; and one may see everywhere in the maize fields on the lower mountain slopes little grass houses on stilts, in which the native entrenches himself to guard his crop by night and frighten away the beasts who would rob him of his harvest.

As one leaves the plains and ascends through the wooded bush country, with its rough, stunted trees and occasional patches of forest, one comes suddenly upon the luxurious green of the coffee plantations, edging the mountain like the velvety hem of a woman's gown.

At an elevation of 4000 feet and over, coffee flourishes to a remarkable degree. Most of these coffee *shambas* are now in the hands of Greek planters, who obtained the cream of the agricultural land from the German Government, ever willing to push the docile native into a corner and turn his rightful heritage to their own better account. Unmindful of the needs of future generations, such lands as were unproductive at the moment were allotted to European planters and missions, without any protest on the part of the native population ; consequently the more enlightened native of to-day finds himself without sufficient land on which to raise the bare food-supply for his family.

So necessary is every foot of their small acreage for growing such crops as are peculiarly adapted for native consumption that the increasing population must await any considerable financial benefit

from such valuable produce as coffee until large areas are restored to them by Government: a belated act of justice, necessitating the repurchase of the land from present European owners.

The Greek, on the other hand, has amassed something approaching real wealth from the use of this rich belt of native acreage peculiarly adapted to coffee-growing. Having purchased the land for a fraction of its present-day price he is now able, after several years of overseeing cheap native labour, to play the part of a country gentleman of comparative leisure.

Since warfare ceased to menace his crops and possessions, and the markets of the world are open to his produce, the former rude habitations of the settler are now being replaced by well-built stone houses picturesquely placed on the highest points of the plantation lands, and the more opulent of the planters are possessors of a reliable old "Ford," the only vehicle which can safely negotiate the steep mountain paths and rocky river-beds; for Kilimanjaro is a fountain-head of rivers. From the great ice dome, set like a Rajah's pearl in the forehead of the earth, radiate, in every direction, folds and ridges, reaching downward from the peak in ever-widening segments until the sharply defined rocky chasms have spread their sides to hold a soft green upland valley; this in turn becomes a wider plateau, and still farther down melts into the vast expanse of desert plain. Between each of these seemingly countless ridges of the southerly slopes are sparkling, leaping streams, dignified by the name of rivers, only one of which—the Weru-Weru

—springs directly from the great glaciers above ; all others are born of the many underground springs high up in the primeval forest.

From these countless little rivers the native has cunningly diverted such streams as are essential to the cultivation of his crops, and the fine irrigation system that winds about the mountain from level to level, like a silver thread round a giant top, compares favourably with the most scientifically planned and levelled irrigation channels on the great fruit ranches of California. The coffee plantation must also have its water during the dry season, and the diverting of water channels from the native plantation to the *shamba* of the European planter is often a cause of dissension, which must be adjusted by the Government representative—generally, be it said, in favour of the native, to whom the loss of his water supply is a tragedy, so great is his dependence on his little plot of maize or bananas.

Quite the prettiest cultivated fields on the mountain are the tiny plots of *mbeke*, a delicate green stalk whose seed when dried is used for brewing native liquor not unlike a sweet beer, and it is man's innate love of stimulants which is the chief reason for the wonderful irrigation system of the mountain. Other crops may survive a lack of rain, although their yield will be distressingly small, but the fragile and precious *mbeke* must be tenderly guarded against drought, and its own thirst assuaged if it in turn is to assuage the thirst of its tippling owner. Great feathery trees shade these small fields, and they are so picturesque, with their vivid green colouring and soft shadows, they might have been

plucked from the painted "back-drop" of some Neighbourhood Playhouse.

The banana groves surrounding the beehive-like native huts are not beautiful except as they increase the luxuriant foliage of the inhabited and cultivated belt below the forest. On the more exposed northern, wind-swept slopes of the mountain they assume a fantastic, torn appearance, not unlike ancient Druids with unkempt locks and tattered garments—a worthy band to dwell beneath the towering crags and frowning face of storm-riven Mawenzi.

In a country like Africa, where climate varies so little throughout the year, it is interesting to note to what extent even a few degrees' variation in temperature, or a slight change in physical contour of the land, influences the native inhabitant. On the luxuriant, well-watered uplands one finds the highest degree of intelligence, the greatest population, and the more pleasing faces and manners, while the north-east and south-west districts, with their never-ceasing dry winds, streamless rocky heights and hot shifting sandy soil, are sparsely inhabited by stern-visaged, undersized, stolid natives, comparing most unfavourably with their neighbours, although separated from them by not more than fifteen or twenty miles.

As the mountain appears lateral when viewed from the southern plateau, one seems suddenly to round a corner at the extreme end, and, passing through a rocky defile, to enter upon a strange world unrelated to the peaceful valleys and green lanes through which one has been loitering. Yet

the open, bleak country to the north has a fascination of its own, as have all Nature's rough-hewn works.

Here, in the plains at the foot of the great mountain, the game roams about fearlessly ; on the scarred and rocky paths above one must fight one's way, battling with the fierce winds which sweep down from Mawenzi's ragged heights : the air is keen and autumn-like, the smell of burning wood and grass recall the golden days of leaf-garnering in the dear homeland, and one turns reluctantly from this stimulating contact with the cruder forces of nature and passes, with laggard steps, through the rocky gateway back to the land of leafy lanes and rippling rivers.

Happy indeed are those who may work and play beneath the shadows of Kilimanjaro, which for the greater part of the year hides nothing of its varied beauty from the patient toilers at its feet ; and to those who dwell in the heated plains below the vast ice-fields of the mountain are as refreshing to the eye as the green palms of an oasis to the desert traveller.

The ascent to the snow-line from the game plains of the dry south-western side lacks the zest of the south-eastern side, as one knows that here the actual summit is unattainable, the way to the top being barred by a great glacier, which one may view at close quarters by a seven hours' steep climb through the overgrown forest path. In the early days of the known history of the mountain a well-worn path skirted the great dome of Kibo, where it sweeps skyward above the forest. On this path



(Upper) HUMP-BACKED AFRICAN CATTLE

(Lower) A MOUNTAIN SHEPHERD AND FLOCK

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crept the warring clans from one district to another, in order that they might fall upon their enemies from above, and possibly take them unawares in the banana-grove villages below the forest. Connecting paths, running up through the forest, were to be found on almost every ridge, but these, as well as the upper road, are now practically obliterated, as the ordinary traffic in native produce is carried on peacefully between the various districts below the forest, and with the more densely populated lower ridges above the plains.

To approach the great glacier on the southwestern side, where the mighty wall of the crater was sundered and the icy waters poured over the crater rim to find an outlet in the gleaming snow-fields below, one must follow the overgrown path upward for a distance of some eight or ten miles at breath-taking gradient, as one moves from 4000 to 15,000 feet. The path first leads from the pleasant mission gardens at Maschame (now deserted and overgrown), at the top of the cultivated terraces of bananas and *mbeke*, with an unseen, roaring mountain stream rushing over its great boulders far below the green banks beside us. The gentle rolling upland pasture is dotted with small herds of diminutive, hump-backed, spotted cows and inquisitive goats, watched over by a little black shepherd with an attendant train of unabashed naked *totos*. These pleasant green fields, crossed by numberless rippling water-furrows, lead gently up to the thick bush, in which one can scarcely trace the faint path underfoot: this, in turn, yields to the bracken-clad rough foothills

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immediately below the forest, and after two hours' arduous walking the hot wind-swept rocky uplands meet the cool gloom of the forest, and three to five hours more of stiff climbing brings one to the edge of the great grass plains which circle the mountain. This gives way to volcanic rock and lava, which in turn reaches up to the line of perpetual snows and the giant crevasses of Kibo's crater walls, on this side inaccessible.

Although the secret of Kilimanjaro's great crater has been sought by many eager explorers only a few have succeeded in reaching even the lower ice-fields, which extend downward 4000 feet from the summit on the south-east and south, and only one route has been followed by the successful six who have conquered the giant and stood upon his hoary head. This route from the south-east side of the saddle plateau was first given to the world by Hans Meyer in 1881, although he did not attain the summit until eight years later. It is well defined until the last few hours of effort, when the ascent becomes too difficult for all but the trained Alpinist with tested lungs and muscles. So much of interest and unusual beauty there is, however, in the regions accessible to those who accept philosophically the limits of their achievements, that one starts with winged feet and great expectations on the upward path toward that infinitesimal notch in the crater wall, knowing that a four days' march will leave one many thousand feet from the coveted goal.

Starting from the dry, dusty bush plains surrounding New Moshi, at the railway terminus, registering an altitude of 2500 feet, one climbs a

long, hot, five miles to the deserted station of Old Moshi, with its battered *boma*, once a flourishing official and military residence, but now given over to bats, and the acquisitive Public Works Department, for whatever each may find suited to his taste and needs in the way of roof beams and corrugated iron.

After a noonday rest one may, if the day is comparatively cool, resume the journey toward a farther camp; but as cool days are in the minority, even during the so-called winter season of Equatorial Africa, the wise traveller goes into camp at the first stop and starts afresh in the early morning for the long fifteen miles of steep up-and-down paths between Old Moshi and Marangu, where the real mountain ascent begins.

The first few miles lead upward through shady banana groves carpeted with a waxen pink blossom not unlike our English phlox. Water-furrows are crossed and recrossed, their moist rich banks dripping with the lush green of maidenhair fern and moss. Here and there between the long steep ridges a rocky stream has torn its way from the height above and, hidden in the breast of a deep ravine, lures a narrow belt of forest to bear it company far out into the plains below, and here beside the river-beds one often finds a luxuriance of tropical forest surpassing that of the true forest zone above, the warmth of the steppe and the adjacent moisture urging the giant trees to excel their brothers in the chill, misty regions above.

Along the beautiful Nanga Valley one follows a smooth, ribbon-like path cut high up in the rocky

sides. This path was once a water-furrow, and, like all native furrows, is so cunningly graded one can scarcely judge whether the way leads up or down. The winding path, with its many sharp turns, is barely three feet in width in many places, and a careless step would plunge one down 500 feet to the valley below ; yet with comparatively small outlay it might be made into one of the finest motor roads in Africa, with entrancing views of the snow-capped mountain and the plains below.

In the shady bits, where one dips down to the river-beds, blue monkeys leap screaming from tree to tree, and the pretty brown-coated hyrax stares inquisitively down from the lower branches, scurrying away at too close an approach. Giant tree-ferns intersperse their lacy foliage with the hardy forest trees clinging to the river banks, and far away above each cliff-like opening gleams the great ice dome of Kibo, seeming to recede as one laboriously approaches it.

After five hours' walking one is glad to reach the chief's camp at Marangu and from the comfort of a folding-chair watch the preparations for the next three days' climb, which begins with the morrow's sunrise, and must be carefully planned and provided for—a week's food supplies, winter clothing for oneself and the porters, heavy blankets and bedding for the sudden change from the pulsing tropical heat of day to the freezing nights of the higher altitudes, and if one is attempting to reach the snow-line, the lightest possible equipment must also be carried for the more difficult final ascent skyward.

With the first streak of dawn the camp is astir, loads are hastily assembled and assigned to each porter, tents are struck, a hasty cup of tea is drunk, and soon the long cavalcade is on its way.

Across a sparkling little river, tumbling over great boulders as it rushes onward from the beautiful waterfall seen in a silver cascade above us, but away from the grassy path we are following, diagonally up over the first steep hills, the long worm-like procession stretches, and soon the banana groves drop away from the hill-side, only a scattered patch of waving leaves here and there marking the last of the cultivated lands, and we are hedged in by dry dust-coloured bracken and groups of scrubby trees. From the path ahead rise great clouds of gay little butterflies as we approach, only to settle down still farther on and await our coming, like children playing hide-and-seek with their elders; the sentinels of the forest stretch out to draw us into the cool shade of primeval growth; the ground beneath becomes a carpet of moss, riven here and there by tangled roots, and suddenly we enter the nave of nature's cathedral, and leave the sun-kissed Chagga Land for our great adventure. Unseen streams break the stillness of the morning air, gay-coloured birds with parrot-like calls fly high above our path from tree to tree, and every gnarled and twisted forest giant holds in its rough limbs clusters of delicate pink and lavender orchids. Here and there great jagged holes beside the path proclaim the passing of elephants, and above us a long limb stretches, with its under surface polished smooth where the lumbering beasts have stopped

to scratch their ugly old backs ; sunlight in specks of gold falls here and there upon the path and on the great waving trails of Spanish moss which festoon the trees as we mount higher. Everywhere nature seems to hold before us a curtain of soft cool greys and greens to rest the tropic-weary eyes before they meet the glare of arctic snows above.

A four hours' climb, with stop for breakfast, brings us to the upper forest line, and here the dense, tropical growth gives way to scattered giant heather, bearded with dripping moss, against the blue tropical sky of noonday, as if some prehistoric *chef* had just poured over them a green pistachio icing and left them to tempt the palate of a greedy giant. The damp woodland path opens suddenly upon slippery grass-land, sun-dried and coarsely tufted, so that one tips unsteadily from bump to bump, and progresses at snail's pace forward over the seemingly endless slope. Clumps of blue lobelias and everlasting flowers—"Kilimanjaro roses," as they are here called—show bits of delicate colour scattered through the wiry, yellow grass, and call one from the beaten path, until in the far distance appears a tiny dark spot against another patch of forest, and with fresh determination tired feet press eagerly onward toward the little Bismarck Hut, where food and rest await the weary porters, and the ambitious mountaineer may sleep in peace with the knowledge that close upon 10,000 feet of the African colossus have been conquered without mishap.

The tiny two-roomed hut which affords our first shelter is one of three erected on the mountain



(Upper) GIANT HEATHER AT 10,000 FEET

(Lower) ICE WALLS 150 FEET THICK

heights by an enterprising German for the use of his tourist countrymen; and although the other two are now fallen greatly into decay, the sturdy little Bismarck, with its smoky chimney, offers welcome protection against the frosty night. Outside are hastily erected grass huts for the porters, and as the chill night approaches, one sees thin trails of smoke issuing from every crevice and low doorway, and the smell of roasting meat proclaims that all are feasting and content. A great camp-fire, presided over by the night-guards, lights the neighbouring moss-hung trees, and casts weird shadows over the forest edge—here only an abortive strip cloaking a sudden steep ascent to higher grass-lands.

As night advances, and the cold blasts sweep down from the snow-clad heights, one is glad to creep half-clothed into sleeping bags, and add all the furs and coats available, for before the dawn the thermometer will have dropped from a noonday register of 110° in the sun to 8° below freezing-point. Throughout the night the shrill call of the Colibus monkey breaks upon the still air, and one wishes one had the courage to exchange the cosy depths of a fur-lined bed for the mossy carpet of the forest a few feet distant, and spy out these shy creatures, with their trailing white tails gleaming like streaks of silver in the moonlight as they dash from tree to tree.

Before the moon has fairly set one is awake and up lest one might miss the glorious dawn. In the dull grey light of early morn the smoke of the dying camp-fire shows faintly against the green wall of

forest ; two or three muffled figures are huddled about the fire, their heads covered and limbs drawn up, to give as little external surface as possible to the chill wind. Seemingly but a few yards from the hut is spread a sea of silver cloud, shutting out all the world below, and as one watches breathless, the clearer light transforms it into arctic snow fields, with here and there a piled-up feathery mass, from which a tiny black tip slowly rises—the peak of some far-distant mountain emerging to greet the day. Before Old Sol is visible the rolling mass of white takes on a tinge of fairy pink, which deepens into rose as the great, fiery orb lifts his head above the blue horizon, and for three wonderful minutes one seems floating on the enchanted seas of make-believe ; slowly the billowy mass rises to greet the sun, and from beneath appear the lower hills and plains, like a toy-land hidden beneath the frosting of a giant Christmas cake, and with the full bursting of the sun above the world the fairy seas break up and float away to play about the icy dome of Kibo, sparkling in splendid isolation 10,000 feet above our little hut.

Eager desire to test our endurance in the higher altitudes and the freshness of the morning air send us onward and upward without waiting for breakfast. The thin tongue of forest separating the lower grass-lands from those leading to the foot of the saddle plateau presents a breath-taking half-hour's climb, when both feet and hands are needed to mount the steep rocky path. With the forest finally left behind one can ride a donkey, and continue for six hours toward the base of Mawenzi,

with comparatively few obstacles too difficult for negotiation by a four-legged beast. Three or four dizzy descents into rocky, dry river-beds must be carefully taken on foot, and the corresponding ascent leaves one breathless; but so long as the donkey bears the strain of ever-increasing altitude, and consequent rarity of atmosphere, the human on his back feels little distress or fatigue, and it has been found wiser to save oneself as much as possible during the preliminary climb, so that one may better cope with the difficulties encountered later, when humanitarian scruples compel the return of the patient donkey to the lower slopes of the mountain.

As one leaves the upper fringe of forest and takes to the wide, grassy plains above Bismarck Hut, the jagged top of Mawenzi looms higher and higher; its great, weathered crags seem to multiply like the fingers of a thousand-armed Buddha. The low, undulating lava hills leading up to its sheer walls become the landmarks in a vast grassy plain, below which stretches the forest belt and the dense green of banana groves down to the dry bush country.

Far in the distance, at the end of a broken chain of baby volcanic cones, sparkles a jewel-like lake, set deep in the heart of towering green walls, the crater Lake of Chala, its source and outlet alike a mystery, and its depths unknown.

Against the horizon, across the low grass and bush plain of Moshi, stretch the gold and purple heights of the Pare Mountains, bare of verdure but beautiful in contour and colouring, their base lapped by the waves of another and larger lake,

Jipe, haunt of the crocodile and hippopotamus. Farther to the right lie other broken ranges, mere hills when viewed from this distance, but actually reaching elevations of 5000 to 6000 feet, and ever ahead of us, across the long ridges stretching downward from Mawenzi's base, is the great dome of Kibo, its snowy top now showing the blue tinge of glacial ice. The edges of the crater wall viewed through binoculars reveal the great piled-up ridges of ice which defy the tropical sun and attain a thickness of 180 to 250 feet.

From the second rest-hut, under the towering heights of Mawenzi, one may still make use of the patient donkey to negotiate the long stretch of rock-strewn plateau forming the saddle between Mawenzi and the actual base of Kibo. But as at this point the time-limit permitted for feminine investigation was reached, and our brief holiday had to give way to the call of official business, the writer reluctantly obeyed orders and "right-about-faced" for the lower regions, where restless natives awaited the *Bwana*.

Up to this point, of something over 14,000 feet, I proudly boasted feeling no fatigue, nausea, or even a slight headache such as afflicted the *Bwana*, and it was a grievous disappointment that I was given no further opportunity to test my powers of endurance. Some happy day I hope to record the achievement of the actual summit of Kilimanjaro by the first Englishwoman, praying that no other than myself may be the fortunate one.

The third resting-place (in which, so far as is known, no woman has yet slept) is a massive cave

made by heaped-up lava boulders, the ceiling formed by the giant of them all resting rather precariously upon his lava brothers. Here, at an altitude of 15,200 feet, the last night is spent before attempting the final ascent to the crater of Kilimanjaro.

As I was debarred by my sex from participating in a later attempt made by the family head and four companions bent on permitting nothing to interfere with the successful negotiation of the ice-crowned summit, I give here a brief outline of their experience as related on their return.

The party of five consisted of the *Bwana* (who organised and outfitted the expedition, commandeered such natives as were willing to serve as porters in the high altitudes, and arranged for advance supplies of comforts for all to await them at the various rest-camps) ; a coast official who had for years cherished the hope of being the first British subject to scale the topmost peak of Kilimanjaro, and who had rigorously trained for the present ordeal by total abstinence from any form of tobacco or liquor for several weeks, and by a cross-country trek of some two hundred and fifty miles ; a young auditor of accounts who had never climbed anything higher than a palm-tree at the coast, and whose chief qualification appeared to be an unfailing sense of humour and indifference to discomfort ; the local inspector of police, whose belief in his prowess as a hardy mountaineer was to be rudely shaken ; and lastly, the local doctor, a young and cheerful medical debutant, who attached himself temporarily to the party as

invited guest, and only remained until a famous apple-tart had been consumed at the first rest-camp.

On arrival at the Great Cave, where the real test of endurance begins, all except the *Bwana* were feeling in more or less degree the effects of the altitude, and had little inclination for food. Tempted by several untouched portions of Mr Heinz's celebrated "baked beans" I fear the family head rather outdid himself, as later developments failed to justify his disregard for caution.

Throughout the night repeated attacks of nausea affected the three who had refrained from the bean orgy, and all were kept awake by a queer hammering noise, which seemed to fill the giant cave. This proved to be the beating of their own hearts at this altitude, and, without exertion, pulsing some one hundred and ten times to the minute.

The stuffy atmosphere of their vaulted shelter induced violent headaches, but the piercing cold wind without, sweeping down from the glaciers, made escape impossible, and all endured as cheerfully as might be the distresses of the night.

A glorious moon was shining, and at two o'clock orders were given for the final attempt to reach the summit. Ice-axes were shouldered together with the lightest possible equipment of cameras and food, as the increasing altitude produced weakness and extreme nausea most difficult to cope with.

A few hundred yards from the cave the sturdy police inspector turned about and headed precipi-

tately for the previous day's camp, some 2000 feet lower on the mountain-side, where porters, food and a wooden hut offered some degree of comfort. The remaining three struggled on through the dark night. The full moon, on which they had counted to ease their difficulties, was now obscured by clouds, and the ground had to be searched carefully by torch-light before each step was taken. Stumbling over rough stones, slipping back on the treacherous shale a half-step for each one gained, hearing one's own heart-beat thundering in one's ears and with heads bursting with pain, the little party crept up at snail's pace, the youthful accountant forced to lie down every five minutes and do battle with nature, and the others glad to avail themselves of the forced rests caused by their companion's temporary illness.

With every gain of a hundred feet the spirits of the real mountaineer, who had wisely trained for the effort, rose exultantly; his headache passed, and his intrepidity and fine fervour carried his two companions on with undaunted courage foot by foot upward. Suddenly the bean gourmet found his legs wobbling, and in a trice he lay on the ground. Repeated efforts to get on resulted in collapse, and, sadly reflecting on his misjudged feast of the previous evening, the *Bwana* reluctantly abandoned the climb at an altitude of about 17,000 feet. Although he could possibly have struggled on for another thousand, he realised that he could not attain the summit, and that his dropping out at the higher altitude would mean that one of his companions would feel it necessary to remain with

him and thus lessen the chances of any one of them reaching the goal.

He therefore returned by slow stages to the cave, there to await with mingled disappointment and pleasure the news of victory. The two remaining members of the party, after reaching the great Ratzel glacier, forced their way upward step by step, cutting their foothold in the treacherous ice, to be finally awarded the spoils of great achievement.

At sunrise they reached the break in the crater wall, and stood upon its rim at last, to gaze upon the hidden lake of ice and snow and the piled-up fantastic shapes of snow-bound lava rock dotting the edge of the frozen lake. Here the crater cone reveals itself, inactive now for centuries, but showing where gigantic forces within the mountain last found vent. Save for the two notches which give entrance to the crater wall, the great dome of Kibo, viewed from below, is an unbroken wall of gleaming ice, holding this glacial lake hidden in its embrace; but viewed from the wall of the crater, three rocky peaks are seen to rise from the wall, one some 150 feet higher than the wall itself, and this is the actual summit of Kilimanjaro, 19,750 feet above the level of the sea.

It was an unfulfilled dream of our little party to reach this point with the Union Jack, but as the young giant was unable to rise after reaching the crater's rim, and was suffering greatly, his more fortunate companion sacrificed his heart's desire, and gave up the attempt to scale the tiny peak, which entailed several hours more of severe heart-strain and effort.



SUNSET CALL ON KILIMANJARO

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The real hero of the hour was the young accountant, whose sterling indifference to his continued state of nausea, and the spirit with which he arose from each "downfall," was responsible for such measure of success as crowned the effort of his companion. Had he given up at any point after my husband turned back, the goal could not have been attained by the other; yet he was most generously conscience-stricken because his wretched state prevented his companion from reaping the full fruits of his great feat. The unselfishness of the scientist was all the more laudable as he himself felt no ill effects of the altitude, and could well have gone on but for consideration of his friend's need.

After an hour's rest for the invalid and the taking of scientific data and photographs, the two successful ones retraced their steps downward over the slippery surface of the glacier, finding the heat of the morning sun had not yet obliterated their cuttings. Meyer records in the story of his ascent how he hung at one moment, suspended by his ice-axe, above an abyss 3000 feet deep. Such a harrowing experience was not for our heroes however, as they had chosen a less dangerous descent of the glacier, and soon left its edges for the slippery but safer shale surface.

Sliding and tumbling at break-neck speed over the loose stones, forced to "ride" their ice-axes like a witch's broomstick in order to retard their progress, their descent was accomplished in one-third of the time required for the upward journey, and they soon rejoined the lonely "mourner" in the cave.

A second night was spent here despite the chill

discomfort of their refuge, as the police sergeant had carried off the only mule belonging to the party, and the accountant was too ill to attempt the journey to the lower camp afoot.

Meantime there were anxious watchers in the little Government station at the foot of the mountain. Signals were expected to indicate the safety and success of the party. An after-tennis company gathered on the verandah of the chief official, waiting for the news which was now a day overdue. The dark of the tropical night fell quickly, and in silence all eyes turned toward the great mountain. Suddenly one cried "a light!" another—"it's a star!" then a quiet voice—"it moves"; and finally all eyes discerned the tiny flashing light high up under Mawenzi's peaks, and knew that something good had been accomplished, and that all were safe.

Two days later the little company straggled in, beards unkempt, faces and eyes burned painfully, and clothing, in one instance, in ribbons, but happy in having secured a measure of victory over the African colossus.

More attempts will be made, more will be written of them, for so long as one's eyes feast on the beauties of Kilimanjaro one must long to conquer its majestic height, and become possessed of its innermost secret.

CHAPTER VIII

QUAINT CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS OF THE NATIVE

An Unannounced Visit to a Native Hut—Apparent Contradictions—Some Native Ceremonies—Consecrating the New Home—Propitiating One's Ancestors—The *Toto's* "Sacrifice"—"Bewitchment" a Rival to Modern Medicine—"Absent" Treatment—Ancestor Worship—Biblical Tales found in African Religion—Comforting the Dead on the Road to Paradise—Curses and Blessings—The Juggler—Ceremonies attending the Dawn of Manhood and Womanhood—Circumcision—Ceremonial Dances—Influence of Superstitious Beliefs

As this very intricate phase of African life belongs properly to the field of exploration sacred to the anthropologist, I have no intention of setting forth any ideas other than such as occurred to me from my own observations among the Kilimanjaro natives, attempting only to relate a few of the quaint and interesting practices which were suggested by study of our own house-boys and the natives with whom I came in contact during my stay in Africa.

It is difficult to realise that the silent, attentive African servant who fills capably the rôle of a European butler, kitchen-maid or "tweeny" in the white man's house returns each night after his labours to the most primitive conditions of life in his own hut. This transition from civilisation to semi-barbarism is one of the most interesting and amazing phases of the African character, and

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fills the inquiring European with an insatiable desire to rend the curtain which separates the two distant modes of life and thought.

Does one's house-boy, who has quickly noted and unobtrusively rectified an error in the placing of the *Bwana's* forks for a six-course dinner, go home after the guests have departed to relate this untoward incident to his wife, and illustrate, by means of sticks from the hearth, the enormity of his offence? Does he carry anything of his European manner into that mud dwelling, where the lesser part of his life is spent with his wife and children, and remember the polite expressions of remorse for such misdeeds as treading on the toes of his *bibi*, or serving her soup in which a *dudu* (insect) has chosen to die?

When he goes to his prayers in the mosque with other good Mohammedans how much of his adopted religion is "swank" and what remains of pure and unadulterated Africanism in his innermost thoughts?

A complete answer to the first question, which occupied my attention as to the living conditions of my "boys" in their own environment, came with an unexpected call on one who was temporarily invalided out of service; the intuitive genius of the dining-room staff. The apprehensive murmurs of the rickshaw-boys when their steps were directed toward the native village, and my destination made known to them, should have warned me against such an adventure; but as I was really worried as to my head boy's indisposition, and had something approaching affection for him, I saw no

reason for not carrying out my impulse to inquire after his health.

When the silent "pad-pad" of the rickshaw-boys drawing the equally silent rubber-tired vehicle brought me to the door of a rather elaborate, thatched mud-hut, no signs of life were visible, and the low doorway was closed with a straw curtain. Pushing this aside I stepped within to find the place in darkness save for the hearth fire, before which squatted a handsome native woman, entirely nude, stirring some concoction in an iron pot.

As close to the fire as possible, without interfering with her work, sprawled the late immaculate "butler," also in a state of nature, playing with an equally naked, pretty baby, about two years old.

Not a stick of furniture was to be seen, unless one could so designate two straw sleeping-mats, rolled against the mud walls.

Needless to say my exit was as noiseless and unobserved as my entry had been, and, on the return of our highly prized domestic to his usual occupations, no mention was made of the visit by either of us, though he had, in all probability, been advised of it by the rickshaw-boys.

One could but conclude that the young dandy (who begged a white linen coat from the *Bwana* to wear over his long *kanzu*, and was seen to arrive and depart from the house thus arrayed, walking painfully in a pair of enormous second-hand patent-leather boots and dangling a cane) reverted at once to conditions of savagery on reaching his own abode, and that his smart appearance and intelligent interest in the white man's affairs were but

the mask adopted for the benefit of his European employers.

On later occasions unannounced visits to the kitchen quarters of our house revealed the ordinarily spotless staff, with faces smeared from ear to ear with "mealy-meal" (a sloppy gruel, composed of ground maize and water), seated about a community bowl on the floor, into which all were dipping their fingers and extracting huge lumps for immediate consumption. Yet these same boys never neglected to immerse all china for the *Bwana's* table in hot water before serving the food, and a speck of dust on the surface of a plate brought abject apologies from the server.

No boy ever answered a summons from the house without a hasty plunging of hands into water, and fresh roller-towels were in constant demand by the staff.

On one occasion I inadvertently surprised the *toto* of the household while he was laundering his *kanzu*, and the sensitive little boy burst into tears because I had seen his bare shaven head *sans* the usual white fez. At another time the kitchen-boy, aged fourteen, retired in high dudgeon to his room on the premises, refusing to come out for several hours, because he had been seen in his waist-cloth, reaching his knees, but lacking only his usual torn and smudgy top shirt.

One is led to judge from these instances that a certain code of morals and manners exists among natives in their relations with the European which ceases to be observed when among their own race. But study and observation reveal

that relaxation from this code extends only to unimportant externals.

The tribal laws governing the morality and responsibilities of the Kilimanjaro native, and the punishment for offence against these laws, are as old as the great mountain which is their dwelling-place. They are founded on beliefs and traditions not dissimilar to those of civilised nations, and are none the less valuable and important because they are born of Paganism as opposed to Christianity. The simplest act in their daily lives is attended by ceremonies and religious rites long ago discarded by more "enlightened" peoples, and one is fain to believe that the native mind, when not occupied with the details of service to the white man, dwells on matters of his moral and spiritual welfare to an unusual degree.

So simple an operation as the raising of the framework for a native hut is attended by prayer, sacrifice and ritual all pertinent to the spirit and life of the home, and which to our modern eyes would seem quite unnecessary and boring. An order to "get on with the work" would suffice for the twentieth-century European landlord.

Not so the African native. His hut is a small work of art built by his friends and himself, and even to his own measure, as the diameter is determined by the full length of the owner (recumbent on the ground) taken twice over and added to by the space he occupies in a crouching position. This measurement is known as "two men's and one corpse's length" (a corpse being buried in a crouching position).

When the supports of the hut have been planted around the circle, four men step within and, facing the four quarters of the globe, chant "Home of earth, house of children, long life young as lambs." This is repeated four times, as this number is held to be sacred, and hence is an invocation for protection to the lives of those who will make the hut their home. It is noticeable that the cattle are included in the invocation, as they share the hut with the owner.

After completion the dwelling may not be entered until it is consecrated, and for this ceremony both old and young are needed to give effect to the boons which are craved for the life and well-being of the family.

Sacred leaves of the *dracæna* are placed above the doorway as a symbol of peace and a petition for continued guardianship by the spirits of departed ancestors. These spirits of the dead play such an important part in native rites one might almost consider them to be the dominating influence in native life. For all good which is desired, as well as for the confounding of one's enemies, the spirits are invoked. For all misfortune which may befall the native—the failure of his crops, the death or illness of his children, the desertion of his wife, the sickness of his cattle—the reason is to be found in the displeasure of his dead ancestors with his conduct, or that of his family, and it falls to a host of diviners, soothsayers, medicine-men, etc., to discover the angry spirit and offer suitable sacrifice for appeasing the ancestral wrath.

These sacrifices are usually made in the form of

slaughtered cattle, the major portion of which is, however, not dedicated to the use of the spirit, but is consumed on the spot by those participating in the ceremony, a goodly share falling to the diviner, by whose advice the sacrifice was offered.

As these ceremonies are held sacred in the eyes of the native an outsider is seldom a witness of them; yet one happens on the unmistakable proof of their existence even in one's own household.

The twelve-year-old *m'toto* in our family came to the *Bwana* one day with the unusual request for an advance of three months' wages—a concession which could not be made without serious investigation, as it meant that not only would the small boy be unable to provide himself with food for the period in question, but that any defection on his part involved a substantial sum.

This little fellow, usually truthful, resorted to every sort of lie before the facts were finally wrung from him. His first glib reason was that he had a "doctor's bill to pay" (a very ancient argument, not unknown to European debtors) but this would scarcely suffice, as all medical treatment is granted free to native servants in the employ of Government officials, and, moreover, the *toto* was bursting with health. He next "owed the tailor" for a much-needed suit which would make him a more presentable member of the *Bwana's* staff. But as the *Mem-Sahib* supplied all uniforms for her "boys" this argument also was laid aside. Necessity for paying an overdue hut-tax for his parents was also eliminated by producing the receipt from the *boma* files.

At last the child was forced to state that he was in urgent need of a *goat*, and this much gleaned, the secret was out. He wished to make a sacrifice to his ancestors for the spirit of his mother, whom he had never known, but who had given evidence (through a hungry father and second wife) of her restlessness in spirit-land, or of some misfortune realised, or threatening, her earthly descendants.

As a goat was purchasable for two shillings and sixpence, and the boy's demand was for something over four pounds, it might be presumed that his thriftless parents had intended to be well nourished before and after the "sacrifice."

The *Bwana* was, in this instance, soft-hearted to the extent of advancing the price of one goat, and with his half-crown the *toto* had to be content.

One of the recurring anomalies of native belief is the attempted combination of Pagan practices with modern science, particularly in respect of medicinal cures. The native hospitals are always filled to capacity with patients suffering from some form of tropical disease, infected wounds or lesser ailments, from which one would believe that the native faith in European treatment was quite sound. Yet no doctor may ever be quite certain that he is the only "practitioner" at work upon the patient's ailments, or that his method of dealing with a case is not being traduced and offset by some wily magician or "medicine-man." When the head boy of my rickshaw trio reported one morning as unfit for work, examination revealed that his ankle bones had "interfered," causing an abrasion unimportant in the first instance, but now

showing signs of becoming septic in the usual African fashion. The boy was sent away for treatment to the native hospital, and told to report for duty when he had recovered. After several days had passed inquiry at the hospital elicited the information that the "patient" had been seen about the premises for a week, but had not applied for treatment. As this apparent "slacking" called for some disciplinary measure the boy was summoned to the house. He exhibited the bruised ankle (now nearly healed) rather shamefacedly, and explained a thin bit of soiled string tied about it as the "cure" which was being effected by the native witch-doctor or medicine-man.

The belief in magic and sorcery is too firmly grounded in the native mind to be eradicated without many years of education and enlightenment. It is ever present, lurking in the background of his surface modernism, and is one of the great forces to be reckoned with in bringing the African into line with the other coloured races who have taken their place among civilised and progressive nations. That the Christian religion alone cannot accomplish this evolution has been proven. Under European rule the Christian faith has been preached and finds converts, but though in localities adjacent to the missions it may have influenced considerable numbers of the people, in proportion to the whole population of these Equatorial territories the Christian element is but a very meagre sprinkling.

The vast majority adhere to their traditional ethics of unadulterated Paganism, in which must be included all forms of belief in omens, witchcraft

and magic, extending to the very simplest facts of the native's daily existence, and which perhaps have their value in instilling a very real fear of wrong-doing and its consequences.

Honesty compels us to admit that the African native is not alone in his adherence to superstitious beliefs. The ignorant Italian fears the "Evil Eye"; the sons of Erin are guided by a thousand and one signs and omens. To differentiate broadly between European and African beliefs of this character, one may hold to the theory that among the former peoples it is a relic of the past, while in Africa superstition is a virile power, not opposed to, but in accord with, the religious tenets of the present day.

The purely religious essence of Paganism in East Africa is, however, *spirit cult*—that is to say, *ancestor worship*. To a people among whom the conception of state is hardly advanced beyond the organisation of the clan, within which the heart and soul of the community is the family, ruled by and dependent on the family-head or parent, it is but natural that the relation of parent to child should survive after death. The African conceives some degree of relationship, either spiritual or physical, between all things. If you cannot bewitch the person of an enemy it suffices to bewitch his belongings, his implements or even his footprints, for what was once connected retains some connection for all time.

The relationship between parent and child is the most intimate of all ties. Reverence for the parent is not lessened by death, and the two beliefs

combined—continued relationship and reverence after death—recognising no separation from the corporeal and spiritual being of the ancestor, could not fail to constitute a religious cult.

In very striking contrast to this prevailing form of Paganism stands the deity-worship of the Masai (the nomadic tribes of cattle-herders referred to previously). They worship no ancestor, neither do they seem to have any belief in an after-life, but they worship the God Ngai, the red god, opposed to whom is a black devil.

It has been maintained against strong argument that the Masai are of Semitic origin, and their myths have been represented as the true original Old Testament accounts. However this may be, it is certain that this non-Bantu race came from northern regions, bringing with them a religion entirely different from that of the aboriginal Bantu race. Their influence in spiritual respects has been great, and their conception of a god may be found grafted on to many a Bantu Pagan religion. Most noticeable is this on Kilimanjaro, where the God Ngai has become Ruwa, the sun ; the idea of a sun-god being of peculiar significance to an agricultural people dependent upon the will of the weather for their actual subsistence.

The myths of a Biblical nature which appear in the Wachagga legends undoubtedly were borrowed from the Masai, but have undergone the changes natural to the varied interests of the two races. Thus the Wachagga relate that God gave all men the foods they required, and planted them Himself ; of one fruit, however, a yam, He forbade them to eat.

Deceived by a stranger, men offended against the divine command, and God inflicted the punishment of death upon man for ever after. Later, God, relenting, gave them one more chance for eternal life, and bade the oldest man of the race to change his skin, whereby he should be rejuvenated. But the change must be effected in secret; and a child intruding at the moment when the old man had but half shed his skin, he died, as men have done since that time. The child was driven away as the cause of this evil and went to live in the bush. Her offspring were the baboons and monkeys of whose descent from humanity so many accounts are current throughout the world, though the relationship has not been admitted in Europe until our time.

In the African version of the first murder, committed here also by brother against brother out of jealousy, God Ruwa was greatly incensed, but permitted the murderer to expiate his sin by payment of seven head of cattle, seven goats and one female child, the penalty exacted for bloodshed to this day. Thereafter the iniquities of mankind roused God's anger so that he twice destroyed them, once by a flood and again by a devouring monster who came out of Lake Jipe. In both these destructions a single family of righteous individuals was preserved with their stock, and in both the destruction extended to the wild animals. In the second account many of the people who were swept away by the flood became wild animals to replace those destroyed. Curious it is that these accounts, like those of the Bible, should include in the destruction

the animals, of which it is not suggested that they could, or did, offend against the divine law.

All these religious conceptions have been grafted on to the Chagga religion, in which they occupy a somewhat incongruous place. That they form no *true* element in the religion of the Kilimanjaro native is manifest from the circumstance that in practice even the God Ruwa has been relegated to a very secondary place. Supreme over all, he holds himself aloof from the doings of the universe; he is worshipped only for certain attributes and remembered only in extreme distress. Since ancient times God has not made Himself manifest to men, but He is acknowledged to be the chief of the spirits, who cannot act save in accord with Ruwa's desires.

For all practical purposes the *m'Chagga* is therefore more immediately concerned with his ancestral spirits, and therewith his religious observances are in all essentials identical with those of the kindred Bantu tribes. He has perhaps a clearer idea than most other Africans of the nature and existence of these spirits. The theory that all spirits remain relentless and malignant until appeased, and that the spirit of the departed still controls the human destiny of those left behind, necessitates sacrifice to the spirit, and these ceremonies begin immediately the death becomes known.

The dead are believed to have a long, weary journey before them over desert wastes, wherefore they are given fat, food and an ox-hide covering to mitigate their discomforts. The journey occupies eight days, and for admission to the spirit

chief's domains the soul must pay an ox ; therefore on the ninth day a bull is sacrificed to supply the ghostly fee. Now, though ancestor-worship may have its roots in veneration for parents, and though the living may entertain devotion to their late-departed elders and relatives, the practice of their cult is hardly a matter of filial affection. Conditions in spirit-land are pitiful ; the spirits are needy and subsist on such unpalatable nourishment as insects and reptiles. Their distasteful supplies and dreary existence may, however, be bettered by the spiritual properties of what their survivors offer them, and it is by consequence their wont to make their desire for food and liquor known to those on earth, which they do by signs, such as the howling of a jackal in the night, the appearance of a snake in the hut, and so forth ; and if these signs do not call forth ready response, they mark their displeasure by affliction of some sort, most generally in the form of sickness.

It is fortunate that the living are concerned only with the spirits of their own ancestry, and that, moreover, after a certain number of generations these become more or less extinct, but even so the African has a large horde of hungry spirits to reckon with, and the drain on his resources is not light.

A further difficulty arises out of the circumstance that when the native falls sick, or is otherwise made aware that he is in spiritual disfavour, he probably cannot know to which spirit he should make sacrifice, and to give to the wrong spirit and so cause jealousy makes matters only worse for him. To discover the solution to this ever-recurring

conundrum is the particular business of a class of magicians, whom we may call *diviners*. They also have to be remunerated, which adds, of course, to the cost of propitiating the ancestral spirits. But having ascertained the spirit to be appeased, the afflicted one will proceed to offer sacrifice of an animal—a bull, a cow, a goat, a sheep—or merely a libation poured on the ground, according to the occasion, the spirit making demands, and also according to the victim's means.

If it happens that the diviner appears to be wrong in his diagnosis the whole business of divining and appeasing has to be gone through again, perhaps not twice or thrice, but repeatedly. In the end it may appear that no number of sacrifices to all the spirits that ever were known will help. This is a sure sign that the spirits have decreed the victim's death. They will not accept his offerings, and when he goes to spirit-land he will find all his sacrifices in spiritual form lodged with the spirit-chief.

It may be mentioned here that if the lucky spirit acquires the whole *spiritual* being of the sacrificial animal offered, his portion of its corporeal being is exceedingly small—actually what is given in sacrifice amounts only to a few morsels, the rest of the meat being consumed by the worshippers themselves. The morsels set aside for the spirit are of course eaten by all sorts of animals ; whether or not the devotee knows this for a fact, he can hardly fail to suspect it, but nevertheless he is satisfied that in a roundabout way his offering has found its way to the spirit.

When a whole cult, with centuries of established belief, rests on this fundamental theory, that the afflictions of men are due in the main to the anger or greed of spirits, and that necessarily their cure must be by sacrifice, it is easy to understand the insurmountable difficulty of disillusioning the African as to the causes of sickness and the means of remedy. When he does consent to apply our medical skill, he more often than not also uses his own remedies, as did my rickshaw-boy, but at most he credits our drugs and cures with a magical power ; so vaccination is to him a magical performance, and the use of a clinic thermometer comes to be regarded in the light of a rite which Europeans have often been asked to enact for the cure of ills of any sort.

We must keep in mind that everything—every ill, every blessing—is attributed to superhuman agency. True it is that the spirits are not always held directly responsible, nor directly propitiated, for every harm sustained. There are influences for good and for evil abroad in all the world ; there is magic, sorcery and good relationship or antagonism from animate and inanimate objects on every hand. But if we take the wording of every prayer directed to the spirits we shall always find the opening words to be : “ Your grandfather (great-grandfather, uncle, grandmother, and so forth), who guards us.” It seems, therefore, that the ancestral spirits are guardians to a certain extent, and, if so, they may be supposed to give protection against evils which otherwise constantly menace their descendants. Perhaps when they afflict men, it is not so much

direct action as suspension of their protection which is the cause of misfortune.

There is, for instance, one evil influence very familiar in Europe—namely, the evil eye. This seems to be hereditary, and its operation is involuntary. Often it is not merely a matter of evil glance, but of thought : certain persons who admire or praise anything involuntarily cause its destruction. Then there is the evil wish, or curse, most effective when pronounced by a dying person. The belief in this is common among all tribes, and is sometimes spoken of as the poor man's remedy, for, while in life the humble are unable to assail the opulent and powerful, their dying curse is as fatal as that of the most exalted. Often the curse would be better called an injunction, since it is frequently used to compel survivors to observe the last wishes of the dying—for instance, a man may invoke curses on those of his sons who commit or omit some act which he wishes them to perform or desist from. The belief in dying curses or injunctions is very real, and though they may be disregarded so long as all goes well, the moment misfortune arises the curse is recalled by even those most sceptical.

Blessing is considered quite as potent as is cursing, and a blessing is a sovereign cure for the bane of a curse when pronounced by one and the same person. It is generally signified by spitting, for as curses are commonly expressed in terms of blood, or blood-shedding (blood being in itself of a ferocious character), so saliva is the gentle opposite to blood, and confers blessing. A common mode of enforcing

the authority of the tribal clan, or family-heads, is to curse the culprit, who, on submission to the desires of the clan, is blessed in order to revoke the curse. In one tribe at least this blessing is expressed by the assembly of elders bespitting the seeker for pardon. One would imagine that the possibility of being bespat by some fifty to a hundred old men would deter most people from doing wrong, and so risking the curse.

Imperceptibly these mysterious forces extend into the realm of witchcraft, which at bottom is a mode of casting a curse of peculiar and, if possible, unknown potency over others. Some are born witches, some never use their powers themselves, but only for the benefit of clients. The forms of witchcraft-practice are without number.

Against all these ills there are, in the first place, preventive charms, with the fashioning of which a host of sorcerers or medicine-men are occupied. To decry their fame is as useless as to attempt to dispel the belief in the evils they cure. It is not a mere matter of eradicating superstition; these beliefs go deeper than that, having their roots in the foundations of the natives' religion and beliefs. They are kept alive by incapacity to distinguish cause and effect, by chance successes and by actual beneficial results, for the native doctor does undoubtedly possess a knowledge of certain drugs and cures of actual utility.

Nor are they entirely ignorant of the art of juggling. A native medicine-man was asked to display his cunning in detecting a thief. He produced a small gourd bowl, which he placed on the

suspect's back and covered it with a blanket. After a few moments he withdrew it, and the gourd was half-full of blood, which he maintained was the suspect's own blood, and which "proved his guilt." This performance he repeated several times, and one was unable to discover, even with the closest scrutiny, how he put the blood into the gourd or how he kept from coagulation the supply which he must have had concealed about his person. Another medicine-man detected a thief by a lizard which he had subjected to incantations. The reptile was held to the suspect's nose and immediately bit him in the nostril, while it would take no notice of others standing about, and on whom it was tried. Testing gave no solution to the miracle.

The medicine-man and sorcerer are, as it were, mediums between mankind and those superhuman powers which cannot be cajoled and propitiated by prayer or bribes in the form of offerings. But where do these forces begin and end? The Chagga who hangs up his beehive in the forest exhorts the rope that is to hoist it to be strong and faithful to him; he excites the sympathy of the tree by groaning under it and bewailing the excessive toil he has undergone to hang up the hive; he bids the hive be pleasing to the bees; he asks forgiveness of the tree of which he fashions the hive.

What strikes one so forcibly is the intimate connection believed to exist between mankind and superhuman forces supposed to exist in animate and inanimate objects. There is nothing animal, vegetable or mineral which is not imbued with life so soon as it comes into personal relationship with

man. There is nothing man can undertake which does not require peculiar and ceremonial observances. The question is, to what extent do the spirits of the dead enter into such considerations? Certainly their powers are little circumscribed and their good-will is sought in all things, as we have said before, probably to retain their protective power against outside forces. But when this does not suffice, magic is brought to aid, either to compel their co-operation or to bind malignant powers over which they have no control. When the native speaks soothingly to a rope or prays to a tree he is, however, not either addressing the spirits or resorting to magic. Is he negotiating with a living being or addressing a rope and the spirit which he himself has imparted to these by taking them into his service? The native has probably no clear idea on these subjects, but such articles are to serve him, and must therefore be favourably inclined—they harbour influences which must be propitiated.

What the native does not know he presumes his ancestors were informed of. The exact meaning of many such beliefs are now not to be ascertained, because those who introduced them lived under conditions which no longer obtain, and there is no clue to their ideas. But what they *did* and observed it is not only wise to follow suit in, but essential, because the ancestors may too easily resent a departure from their rules and habits. Thus a smith must teach his son to become a smith, just as all his ancestors did, for the ancestral shades will not permit their art to become extinct among their descendants. The spirits are thus also

guardians and preservers of custom, and those who offer slight to those customs are afflicted or become ceremonially unclean. Ceremonial purification may then be performed by certain medicines or magical performances, but most often by specific rites which are known only to elders of a special grade.

Most ancient, perhaps, of all ceremonies is that of circumcision—so ancient indeed that its origin and object are lost in antiquity; certainly natives themselves have no idea why it exists. But the antiquity and mystery of the rite make it most sacred among all customs. It is practised by the great majority of Bantus, and marks the transition from childhood to manhood.

Equally venerable and sacred with the circumcision of males is the corresponding rite of the females, a practice peculiar to Africa. Both these ceremonies are always attended by much celebration, and as the young Wachagga boy or girl approaches the period of dawning manhood or womanhood, both sexes look forward eagerly to the ceremonials attending this transition from childish pursuits to the more serious duties of life.

Preparation for these ceremonials goes hand-in-hand with instructions to both sexes on the duties and responsibilities devolving upon each after their bodies have been duly purified and consecrated to the great end—parenthood.

The ceremonial of womanhood for the young girl is of a personal and private nature, and is not without its compensations. The operation by a skilled old woman of the clan is performed on the girls singly in their own huts, surrounded by their female

relatives, and is preceded by the decking out of the girl's person with all the "family jewels." The young throat and breast are fairly weighed down with great ropes of vari-coloured beads; a belt of the same encircles her waist and thighs, and on the legs and arms are worn great iron bracelets and strings of bells.

Seemingly everything possible is done to divert the child's thoughts from the ordeal in prospect. Gifts of goats, grain and household utensils are brought by the relatives and friends if they be of a well-to-do circle, and on this day the girl is presented by her mother with her own hoe and a cooking-pot, the symbols of the woman's domestic rule in the realm allotted her.

After the operation the girl is joined by her family in the hut, and is there anointed with fat by her father and all the female members of the family. She then joins her young companions (who may or may not have been through the same ordeal) and they become the centre of an admiring circle of dancers — youths and maidens — who link arms and surround the young girl who has just achieved womanhood.

Sometimes one, more often three or four, of the newly initiated maidens dance slowly backwards and forwards in the hollow of the ever-widening circle, their bells and clanging iron ornaments giving forth a rhythmic musical note as they bend their knees and swing to and fro on the tall staffs presented by the father of each for this momentous occasion.

Often an elder sister (with little beauty to boast

of, but making the most of this opportunity to shine in public) directs the steps of the younger girl, walking and dancing backward and forward before the much-bedecked little sister, stamping, clapping and chanting a weird tune at intervals in unison with the clanging iron bells and anklets of the *première danseuse*.

It is also the privilege of the mother, or sister, of the young principal to receive gifts of money, trinkets or grain from the guests. For this purpose the woman who dances before them carries on her staff a large cloth bag, open-mouthed, and modestly invites the donations of stray shillings from the onlookers. One notices that though the dancers never stop, there is much surreptitious observation of the bag and its slowly increasing bulk.

On the day when I was permitted to make personal observations of these ceremonials I happened unawares on the celebration, following the tinkling bells across native fields till they led me to the feast in a near-by banana grove, and unfortunately I had no coins with me, as this was the first celebration I had ever actually witnessed, and I was unaware of the custom of donations to the newly initiated. I was soon made conscious of my delinquency by the disappointed look on the young girl's face as the bag was uplifted in vain before me.

This time of initiation is, to the budding belle of black Africa, fraught with infinite romance. Often her betrothal dates from this eventful day, and if it has preceded it the day of celebration will be marked by special favours from her betrothed and his family.

On this day, or later, after her complete recovery, the father of the young man she is to marry will probably give her a goat or sheep. His mother may give her a set of milk gourds and platters of fat. The young man of her heart will at this time, or later, hang a necklet of bright-coloured beads about her neck in the presence of assembled guests, and this betokens that she is his chosen bride, and may not be wooed by other suitors.

Following on these rites comes, among most tribes, an initiation ceremony, signifying the final entry into manhood and womanhood, and most generally accompanied by instruction in the "whole duty of man," and the sphere of woman's activity.

The next great ceremony for every African is marriage, and an essential part of every marriage is its contract in the form of dowry payment by the husband, which, however, is often delayed until the union is blessed with offspring, and is sometimes substituted by personal service.

The final ceremony of man is his death and burial. But not all tribes practise burial; some content themselves with throwing the corpses of their dead into the bush, there to be devoured by animals. Yet this amazingly lax custom indicates no lack of reverence for the dead. Among several tribes, notably the Chagga tribe, corpses are buried with much ceremony. In the tribe named the burial of all, excepting childless persons, takes place in the hut, the corpse being laid to face Kibo. A couple of years later the remains are exhumed and the skull is preserved by itself. Certain chiefs' families have preserved the ancestral skulls of

many generations, and offer annual sacrifice to them.

All these ceremonies are accompanied with prayer and sacrifice, signifying that they are concerned with religious worship.

Space will not allow of doing more than just touching the fringe of all these spiritual elements in native life. Still we surmise enough perhaps to be astounded at the multitude of influences that surround the African from birth to death. It is no life of indifference to things spiritual, it is a life perhaps more engrossed with spiritual than with bodily considerations. The question is, has all this any meaning, any value, or is it mere waste of time and folly? On the whole we must recognise that by this mass of superstitions, fears and behests the native is kept from straying from the path of life which in his own estimation is the way to righteousness. Even witchcraft has its benefits. It is, as we have said, the poor man's weapon; the fear of it has kept many a one from committing wrongs from which the fear of arms would not deter him. Many a seemingly savage practice inculcates at least restraint, patience, reverence and endurance—in short, they have their disciplinary value, without which primitive men must have remained little distinguished from beasts. And the outcome of it all is, if not virtue itself, at least an appreciation of virtue.

The ceremonies pertaining to dawning womanhood and manhood, primitive and even suggestive as they may appear to the European, have really a deep significance and far-reaching effect on the

morals of the young people of both sexes. The utter lack of self- or sex-consciousness is the most noticeable feature of their ceremonial dances, and to any student of human nature the simplicity and straightforwardness of bearing in the participants reveal a clean and fearless attitude toward the facts of nature, whose real design is accepted and approved openly and joyously.

It would be well-nigh impossible to convince them of the immodesty of such proceedings, and anyone who has lived among the Wachagga of Kilimanjaro, visited their villages or entered their huts, must have observed that their fine, intelligent faces show no trace of pernicious thoughts or habits, and prudish criticism of these ceremonials is banished before the realisation of their significance.

Motherhood is the great goal of the Wachagga woman, for it is through this that she gains dignity and the respect of her family and tribe. Every step of the initial preparation for her great rôle is eagerly awaited, and she participates in each ceremonial, from childhood on, with a clear understanding of its significant bearing on her ultimate achievement.

The consecration of her body goes hand-in-hand with the more matter-of-fact preparations for home life and domestic utility, and the men of her family and tribe participate in these preparations with the same utter lack of sex-consciousness.

To tradition and the custom of their revered ancestors they pay tribute in all these ceremonials which have been handed down from generation to generation, and it does not seem fitting that the

alien white man or woman should discover in them that which is objectionable from the European point of view.

Until the processes of the African mind are fully revealed to those who have taken upon themselves responsibility for the welfare of the race there is much need for delicate discretion in dealing with these intimate matters so shrouded in mystery.

In disturbing the ancient privileges and customs of an alien race let us first be assured that the ends attained justify the means of attainment. So long as the African continues to present an almost enviable example of the sanctity of marriage, and the cementing of family ties for the furthering of his race, it would seem no duty of his self-constituted white guardian to uproot the practices and beliefs on which are based the entire structure of African life and good citizenship.

CHAPTER IX

MATRIMONY AND THE AFRICAN WOMAN

The "Coming-Out" Dance—Boy and Girl Loves—Betrothal—Dowry—Instruction in Marriage Duties—The Bride in the "Cage"—The Honeymoon—The Women's Market—Taming of the Shrew—Polygamy and Spinsterhood—The "Big" Wife—Difficulties besetting the African Husband—Women and Witchcraft—Motherhood—Woman the Important Factor in Africa—Heroic Black Women of Chagga History

To the European at home, and more particularly to the European woman, the life and position of the weaker sex in Africa seem matters for commiseration. As such, it strikes also the new-comer or casual observer in Africa. A servile existence of drudgery it appears, with the status of a chattel or of a beast of burden, without joy and devoid of ambition. Polygamy seems to make the lot of the woman even more degraded, since it robs her of a natural claim to the unshared protection and devotion of her partner in life. Such an impression is further heightened by frequent discord and divorces which come to the notice of the Europeans in their midst.

It does not, however, take the careful observer long to suspect some flaw in the theory. The character and spirit of the women will not quite fit into the rôle of down-trodden slaves. Their cheerfulness belies a joyless existence, and the persistent priority of their interests in tribal affairs suggests that their position is by no means beneath notice.

One thing is certain—namely, that if there is any creature rare and despised by the African woman, it is a spinster ; indeed that state of life is almost inconceivable to her. In the preceding chapters we have endeavoured to show that herein Christianity meets one of its strongest obstacles, and any attempts to go against nature in this respect have, and must have, a disastrous effect on the morals of Africans. For this reason, also, marriage at an early age is beneficial ; but girls are, generally speaking, married later in life than is popularly believed, for most commonly Europeans under-estimate the ages of Africans. True it is that, under special conditions, child-marriages occur, yet in many cases the reason may be traced to abnormal conditions due to European influence, though we may not be directly responsible. For instance, in a certain tribe, the introduction of a tax on unmarried youths led to the absurd conclusion that being taxed, as were married men, they might as well marry, though their ages ranged from sixteen years upwards.

On the other hand, betrothals take place from earliest childhood and are promised even before birth. Parents are given to scheming for their children much as they are in Europe, but equally children are apt to make their own arrangements in Africa also, and the affair often leads to conflict between parental influence and filial independence, ending, as it does in Europe, with victory to the stronger side.

Let it not be thought that Africans are indifferent to personal charm, or to convenience. The young

native is keenly susceptible to feminine attractions, and as the beauties of the dusky ladies of Central Africa are more lavishly displayed than is the case with their European sisters, the youths are blessed with corresponding greater advantage than is the European suitor. Pretty faces alone do not spell desirability to the African wooer. He is a connoisseur in the matter of shapely hands, straight backs, pretty feet and rounded knees, and often a sparkling-eyed coquette is passed by for her plain-visaged friend who moves with grace and shows "points" to the beauty in the matter of small feet and hands. As in Europe, so in Africa, the dance is the "coming-out" event of the young girl's social life, although the African debutante is several years younger than her European sister; and here, as at home, the fond parent is wont to cast a judicial eye over the assembled youths with a thought for the future of her fledgling daughter.

Watching a native dance one is forcibly struck by the similarity of attitude between the savage and civilised parent, the child of the bush and his European brothers and sisters. Here are fathers and grandfathers standing about in little groups, shaking their heads and discoursing on the degeneracy of the modern dances; proud mothers attempting to disguise their interest in the daughters' social progress (but ever watchful of the attention they attract, and ready to draw them to their side to fasten up their scanty clothing, or whisper a word of advice). Youths withdraw to the shade of the banana groves to rest and consort with their fellows, and to discuss their various

conquests. Here and there in the moonlight may be seen a loving couple, sheltered by a friendly ant-heap, holding each other's hands, and gazing fondly into sparkling eyes. One notes, too, the presence of the "wall-flower" of civilisation, for Africa, with her surplus women, offers the keenest competition among the gentler sex, and the early marriage is the one most sought for and honourable. The least attractive females must be content to bide their time and become second wives to their heart's desire, or be wedded to an older man who may have lost his wife, or been passed by for lack of the qualities or of sufficient wealth to attract the girl who has other suitors from whom to choose.

The young Chagga girl who is betrothed at an early age is the recipient of gifts from her boy-lover possibly for a period of several years, and this early attention from the opposite sex tends to eradicate much that is childish and natural in a young girl, and to make her more calculating and worldly-wise than the child of civilisation. Because of these protracted betrothals the young boys commence very early to acquire a small capital from which to pay the expenses of courtship, but even the finest of presents will not prevent the object of his youthful admiration from being attracted to another man when she arrives at years of discretion. From this alone it appears that ultimately the real affections or desires of the girl are the deciding factor in her marriage. One must be careful not to under-rate the affection existing between betrothed couples, for not all the pressure in the world can force an African girl to marry

against her will, and the long period of betrothal in many ways prepares the young couple for what they must expect of each other in the closer bond of marriage, and hence lessens the likelihood of dissatisfaction and divorce.

It is not unusual for the African lady-love to demand proof of her lover's devotion by putting to him tasks requiring some degree of chivalry or fearlessness. For instance she may say, "If you really love me, eat this snail," and the lad will overcome his revulsion to please her; or they will agree that whichever one dies first shall come from the lower world to fetch the other. When the affianced one dies, this devotion will often develop into raving—for instance we were told of a youth who drank the blood oozing from the nostrils of his dying bride, and sickened thereof himself.

Formerly, betrothed couples would conclude a blood bond to secure their love for all time, but this law is now condemned as folly, because if later they should hate and curse each other both must die.

The giving of presents by the suitor is not confined to his betrothed alone, but once he is assured of her affections he is expected to give abundantly during the period of betrothal to the girl's parents and relatives. If the girl of his choice accepts the beads and cloth which he has brought her at his first wooing, he next approaches the mother, and if he meets with no direct opposition from her he will brew beer and invite the girl's father, bringing forth his suit as they sit drinking. The principal negotiations are concerned with the dowry to be paid to the father, and which nominally falls due

on the day of actual marriage, but the gifts to the girl and her family during betrothal form no part of the actual dowry. Every marriage entails a payment by the suitor to the parents ; it may be as little as a hoe in one tribe, or as much as a herd of cattle in another, or personal service verging even to serfdom may be rendered in lieu of payment in kind. In some tribes it is identical with blood-money—that is to say, the compensation exacted for the life of a woman. Elsewhere it is determined by the amount paid for the girl's mother, and in another tribe the sum may be fixed for all women. In certain tribes the dowry is not paid until the woman has borne children, or is past child-bearing ; in some tribes immediate payment is essential, and again, among other natives, the latter demand is evaded by simple wife-robbery and subsequent payment.

Indeed wife-robbery survives in many regions, and in many tribes the marriage ceremonies include acts, such as the carrying away of the bride or pretended resistance on her part, which undoubtedly are relics of times when robbery was the ordinary practice, resulting in bloodshed, which ended only when the parents agreed to accept compensation, until finally this payment became the rule.

Unfortunately the subject of dowry has loomed too large in the European estimation of native marriage and has been represented as a matter of purchase or barter, wherefore Europeans have been prone to under-rate the native's respect for his women-folk ; but as well might we regard the giving of a wedding ring as a like sordid practice, which

certainly had its origin from the same motives. Let us therefore think of the African dowry as a formality surviving from the most primitive times, and as such marking a distinct advance from savagery.

Everywhere in Chagga Land it is the custom for a betrothed girl to assist her future mother-in-law in the field and housework ; she may even cultivate her future husband's fields as if she were already his wife. But when the time has come for the marriage to take place, she must be at her parental home. Both the period of courtship and the preliminary arrangements may be protracted over several months, and constitute such a series of celebrations, each marked by some rite or ceremonial, that it is difficult to say exactly when the actual marriage takes place. There will always be the formal handing-over of the bride and her transfer to the bridegroom's home, but even then it is not customary for the bride at once to share the hut with the bridegroom. Ceremonies distinctly relating to completion of marriage recur indeed long after, and vary greatly in different districts. Festive dances participated in by all the relatives and friends of both bride and groom last for several days preceding the more sober ceremonies. The matrimonial arrangements are concluded by two agents for the couple, a male and a female relative, called *m'wisi* (the knower), whose duty it is to instruct them on every step of the marriage ceremonies and the duties of each therein, lest they offend against custom. These *m'wisi* for ever after stand in the relation of sponsors,

mediators and guardians to each. The presence of these agents or their heirs is very essential in matrimonial ceremonies observed later in life.

On the last day of the celebrations the bride dances alone, surrounded by her women relatives and friends, and in the evening the father of the bridegroom goes with all his family and relatives to fetch the bride from her home. An elderly woman now anoints the father and the bride with butter on the forehead. The bride's father then hands her over to the bridegroom's father, saying: "Take this, my child, well into your care, and do not make a goat of her"—that is to say, do not use her merely as a worker.

The procession now moves to the house of the bridegroom's father, headed by his father and mother, next come the female relatives with the bride, and finally the men with the bridegroom. On arrival at the hut the bridegroom's mother hangs a necklace of the seeds of the wild banana around the bride's neck; these seeds are used on other occasions and are the symbol of fertility.

For a period of some weeks prior to the actual ceremony of marriage the bride will have been confined within her mother's hut in a small cage constructed of light sticks, from which she never emerges in daylight, or possibly not at all. During this period she is fed on fattening foods, chiefly provided by the prospective bridegroom. Her body is daily anointed with oils, and she does no work.

This enforced stay in the darkness of the hut is supposed to lighten the colour of her skin and make

her more beautiful and desirable when she emerges from "captivity." (As I myself have stood in one of these "cages," I can vouch for its being no real prison, as even a child could break the twigs of which it is formed, and it seems more the shelter of a black fairy than the temporary prison of a "slave.")

The day on which the bride leaves the cage is marked by celebrations which seem to constitute the actual ceremony of marriage, as, on this day, a beast is slaughtered and rings from its skin are placed on the bride's arm by the *m'wisi* in the hut, and on the bridegroom's middle finger of the right hand. In the evening the bridegroom and his *m'wisi* enter the hut where the bride and her *m'wisi* are alone, and after a ceremonial eating of meat the bride and bridegroom are left together, although the mother of the bridegroom remains on the premises.

The honeymoon period of seclusion varies from two to four months, during which time the young couple are fed by friends and relatives, who vie with each other to supply them with dainties. Before the hut are placed two staffs such as are used for hill-climbing, and on these each one places the cushion of banana leaves he used on which to carry his load to the hut ; therefore the higher the pile of such cushions the greater the honour to the young couple, and for the same reason a husband who is emaciated during this period is laughed at as a poor devil to whom none would give food. To spare her son disgrace the husband's mother will often visit her relatives and friends with gifts of sour milk

or beer, acceptance of which entails on the recipient the supplying of nourishing foods to the newly married couple.

During the honeymoon period the bride never appears outside the hut and the bridegroom does not stray from the village and does no work.

The exit of the bride from the hut is marked by her ceremonial appearance among the women at the market. For this occasion she anoints her body with fat and is adorned with all her ornaments and bells, and visits her relatives before appearing in the general gathering at the market, from which all men are excluded. Indeed, in all affairs peculiarly appertaining to women, the men play an entirely passive rôle. For instance the initiation ceremony for young girls is conducted exclusively among women, and in all the many acts of preparation no male may be present, or even passing. Similarly, at the birth of a child, the father may not be present, nor at the rites observed in regard to the mother and infant. Within the state there is, as it were, a pact of the women with its own means of defence. Side by side with the support of the woman's family there is this sex-combine, which constitutes the stronghold of the women, and protects them against any possible degree of enslavement.

The place where this is made most clearly evident is the market. Here the women have full opportunity for free expression and exchange of ideas amongst themselves, and conversation is all but discreet ; none is afraid to reveal the most intimate affairs. Wives are enlightened as to the doings of their husbands ; she who is content and modest

is encouraged to demand, and initiated into all cunning to be used against her husband. Here one will laughingly tell of some deception practised against her husband, another will expose her husband to cynical derision. There is a Chagga saying, "A fall amongst men is no fall amongst women"—that is to say, he who offends in male society meets with the forbearance of his sex, but he whose offence becomes known among the women is gossiped about to the remotest hut. In other respects the market plays a prominent part in the woman's life. Here she goes not only after marriage, but after giving birth to a child, and on the death of her husband. Thus the market becomes the centre of the woman's life outside her home, and is looked on by the men as a fearsome gathering to be avoided. It is only the poorest, hungriest and least self-respecting of males who ever avails himself of the "market right"—a special permission sometimes granted by the chief whereby the man may seek bits of food from the women of the market-place. To the market were taken also those who were cowardly in war, that they might be exposed to the derision and laughter of the women. Fear of being shamed before the women has steeled many a man's heart. Their songs of battle speak of this, and there are many such in which the desire for the good opinion of their women-folk have roused the courage of the warriors. Though the women seem to play a very inferior part in the history of the country at present, their past records tell of brave deeds and loyalty to their men in time of danger, and, when dire necessity compelled, they

have even taken active part in a warfare of protection for themselves and their families, disguising themselves as males and confronting their enemies. That they are far from submissive and indifferent to their own desires is shown in a Chagga tale, which might fittingly be entitled, "The Taming of the Shrew": "There was once a man who had a wife. Whatever he commanded her to do she refused, and when he said, 'I will punish you,' she answered, 'Well then, punish me.' But the man was a wizard, and he invoked a leopard. The leopard came and seized the woman, but the man had forbidden the leopard to bite her. Therefore the leopard only carried her to the plain and the husband closed the house and slept. Next day he removed the spell, and the leopard brought the woman back. And the husband asked her, 'Will you now ever again disobey me?' and she answered, 'Oh no, my master.' Two days passed, when he again gave her an order and again she disobeyed. Then he called the leopard, and when she saw the beast she trembled much; but the husband was not to be moved, and let the leopard carry her off a second time. At midday he removed the spell and she returned home. From that day on she was submissive and regarded the words of her husband."

It must be confessed that in Africa the woman's main support is in her own kin, for the blood-tie is stronger than the marriage-tie, which is but natural where all beliefs and practices are founded on the strength of the family or blood relationship, which endures beyond death. In times of trouble the

woman will invariably look for aid to her own brothers rather than to her husband, and the husband therefore respects the hint when the wife says, "Do not treat me as though I had no one at home." The least important squabble may induce her to return to her family, when she will always find support and shelter, while her husband will be compelled to run after her to appease and persuade her to return.

In the relations between sun and moon the Chagga husbands find a humorous reflection of their married life. The sun is a man and the moon a woman. When the moon disappears they say, "The moon has gone home to her relations," and when it reappears they say, "The moon has returned to her husband because he was distressed." They also call the sun the ruler of men, and the moon the ruler of women. The heat of the sun is the sign of manly strength and boldness, while the silver sheen of the moon typifies the gentleness and dependence of the weaker sex.

To be married at an early age, and to a desirable husband, is the great hope of a Chagga girl. The greatest curse used between girls is, "May you become a second wife," for what has been said concerning devotion between man and woman applies as a rule only to the first wife. The subsequently married women are taken mainly as workers, or for other material reasons, and, as we shall show later, usually by express desire of the first wife.

There is no limit to the number of wives a man may have. The richer he is the more wives will he take unto himself, and a single wife is merely an

indication of poverty, and places both husband and wife very low in the scale of social importance. A chief once seriously suggested that in order to be at home in every part of his domain he should establish ten wives in each district over which he ruled. The fulfilment of this ingenious device demanded no less than one hundred and twenty marriages on his part, but he was not far short of the number, and was prepared to make up the slight shortage existing.

Polygamy is to the native the only normal condition of life. If it is repugnant to our principles, we must nevertheless concede that it seems to be provided for by nature. Statistics prove that in certain tribes the female population exceeds that of the male by no less than 25 per cent., and even more. What, then, are the Africans to do with the surplus if, and when, a man restricts himself to one wife? The answer is given in the calamitous state of affairs existing in such a country as Uganda, where the advance of Christianity has gone hand-in-hand with increased immorality.

In an enlightened and civilised country, where women have, through centuries of education and training, reached a point of independence and ability to seek out their own careers through intelligent, well-directed effort, there is still the question constantly before the public, through the medium of the modern Press, as to woman's fitness and adaptability for life outside that of wifedom and motherhood. What, then, must be the utter blankness of life for the woman of wholly uncivilised lands, without even the rudiments of education, and

with no hope for decades of any outlet for her energies, if denied that provided by marriage, motherhood and work for herself and her children ? It is a fallacy to believe that polygamy exists to the advantage of the husband, for rather it is a boon to the woman and a questionable privilege for the man. Close acquaintance with domestic affairs in Africa leads us, indeed, to ask why men are induced to take more than one wife. In actual fact the man's personal comfort has little to do with it. Considerations of social standing and numerous offspring carry weight in this respect, but in the majority of cases men are persuaded, and even obliged, by their own spouses, to take a second or more wives. The first wife, or "big wife," as she is called, holds the place of honour ; other wives are subservient to her ; and not only vanity but the desire to be relieved of the sole burden of domestic duties prompts her to urge the husband to take a second wife. For the same reason the second wife will in due course inveigle her husband into a third marriage, and so on. Thus the situation is not at all as it appears to the uninitiated.

Furthermore, we must realise that the whole aspect of matrimonial life is radically different from what we usually conceive it to be. It is not merely that one man has several wives, but he has several families. Each wife has her own children, for whom she must care and work, who have no concern with the other wives, and who must eventually be provided for by inheritance of a distinct portion of the father's property or of what the mother has accumulated through her own toil.

Each wife has her own hut, her own fields and her separate portion of stock, so that she lives with her offspring as a semi-independent family. The father stands in relation to all, more or less as the rivet of the family, and because he cannot devote himself entirely to any one wife, as time goes on each woman's son takes over the particular care of his mother, and stands in relation to her as guardian. This relationship goes so far that, often, when the son marries, his mother goes to live with him, and more or less gives up her married life. Strange as such a conception of marriage may be it is inevitable where men are the husbands of several women. A much nearer resemblance to European matrimony exists, however, between the African and his first wife, who in a sense may be described as his only true spouse. With her he consults in all matters; in his absence she rules the village; to her the other wives must render respect and service; her son enjoys the lion's share of inheritance because she has the larger portion of her husband's lands and stock. Rarely, if ever, will the first wife desert or be divorced: if her husband makes younger wives his favourites, the first wife's hut is his proper home, if he may be said to have any at all, and in no wife will he confide to the degree that he does in the first, or "big," wife. That jealousy should exist between the various wives, and that the husband should be the chief sufferer therefrom, is no matter for wonder, and is well illustrated in the following quaint story told of a certain clan which, until recently, was remarkable for its adherence to monogamy:—

“The ancestor of the clan had two wives, the senior old and jealous of the greater charm of the younger, the junior wife young, and envious of the other’s superior position in the household. One day the husband, returning home in a heavy down-pour of rain, entered the senior wife’s hut, but was shrewishly driven out and bidden to go to his favourite, the younger wife. When he did so the younger woman would have none of him, and bade him seek shelter in the more honourable hut of her superior. The husband again tried his luck with the senior wife, but with the same result as before. Then again returned to the junior, only to be ousted a second time. So he went backwards and forwards, in the drenching rain, without comfort and shelter. Next morning he summoned his clansmen and related his sufferings of the night, saying that whereas he possessed two wives and two huts, he enjoyed none of the comfort which would have been his had he but one wife. He then solemnly cursed for ever all those of his clan who should be foolhardy enough to marry more than one wife.”

This fanciful tale aptly illustrates the true state of affairs as it frequently is in the village of a man whom we should suppose to be master of a band of servile women. The jealousies often existing between the wives give the unfortunate husband little peace, and one is inclined to agree with the prophet, that if a man cannot be just to all his wives, it is better to content oneself with a single wife. How little friendship can exist between the jealous wives of one husband and with what mistrust he should listen to what one says about the

other is expressed in the saying, "One wife does not anoint the other's back with butter."

Yet despite the tales which reach one's ears of strife and occasional bloodshed among the wives of one man, there are many families living in apparent peace and friendship, childless wives, or those who have lost their children, even sharing the hut of those who have children by the husband, and many work together and enjoy life together in a seeming atmosphere of equanimity.

Great credit must be given to the husbands for their ability to keep peace in their various households, and it redounds to their credit that far more divorces are sought by the women than by the men, save in the case of a barren woman, who is, as a rule, divorced by the husband, more particularly if she be a first wife; and the barren or childless woman is not given ceremonial burial, but her body is cast into the plain. Thus a premium seems to be placed upon motherhood, which cannot fail to rouse and keep alive the best instincts of the woman. One supreme distinction between the first wife and the others is the fact that the first wife practically never remarries after the death of her husband, and only for the most serious offences, or for childlessness, will she ever be divorced by the husband.

Divorces are by no means uncommon, yet not so frequent as they appear to Europeans, who judge more by the exceptional cases which come to their notice than by the rule, which, because it is the general practice, is not so obvious.

On the other hand, divorce is easy, and fortunately so. Men and women of such primitive

mentality cannot always be expected to exercise the restraint and consideration necessary if connubial bliss is to prevail through life, and if harnessed together, without possibility of separation, there could but result many a tragic life and end to life. Fortunately, also, divorces are easily revoked. Children always belong to and remain with the father in case of separation from the wife. This also is a wise provision of native law, for the fear of losing her children will induce many a woman to be faithful and loyal to her husband, while motherly love will often bring her back to him.

It is regrettable that misconception in all these matters has betrayed the European into taking an unconsciously mischievous part in matrimonial affairs, and too lightly has he countenanced the dissolution of native marriages. Divorces are now far more common than they were. The legal mind of the European has grasped only the legal points involved, without full consideration for, and understanding of, their inner meaning and spirit. The mistake made is being soberly rectified by the simple means of entrusting the settlement of all matrimonial affairs to the native elders, who alone can comprehend the situation on either side, and maintain the true ideals of their people.

A native was, on a certain occasion, found to be the possessor of a hut for which he had omitted to pay tax. By way of excuse he alleged that he made no use of the hut excepting to sleep in when he quarrelled with his wife. This little incident affords a striking picture of the actual and relative positions of husband and wife. Popularly imagined

as tyrant and lord of all in his home, this husband was nevertheless fain to seek shelter outside the family residence. In truth, if there is anyone who rules the village it is the wife much more than the husband. In a thousand ways the women make felt the weight of their desires and influence, not only in the home, but throughout the country. Infinitely more superstitious and seemingly more susceptible to supernatural forces, more frequently in need of medical aid and more prone to dabble in magic, their bodily and spiritual care becomes the husband's daily burden, and one may say that the thoughts and activities of the men-folk are predominantly monopolised by and centred on the women.

But there is a finer medium through which women's influence is strengthened—namely, motherhood.

Among people who practise polygamy the child necessarily grows up under a mother's care, and in her ways and likeness, to a greater degree than with us, and the bond between mother and child is strengthened by the circumstance that, as already related, mother and child constitute a closer family circle than father and mother, and that this intimacy waxes through life, until finally the woman's true status is less that of a wife than a mother. So maternal influence is paramount in Africa. There is nothing in African relationships so enduring and fine as the love that mother and son bear for each other. So soon as the son is able to speak for himself he will unfailingly champion his mother against all, and woe betide the man who falls foul of his wife and finds himself confronted with son and mother in close alliance.

Can it be supposed then that African women are mere chattels and slaves kept for the pleasure and convenience of their men ? Those who understand Africa are well aware that women constitute the dominant factor of the Dark Continent. Yet this is a truth not often freely recognised, and in all discussion of African affairs you will find a remarkable absence of this recognition ; but until the female sphere is explored and promoted, real advance of the native is not to be expected.

What is the reason for this neglect ? It is simply that the woman's strength is quiet, unobtrusive and almost imperceptible. She operates not manifestly and directly, but behind the scenes, manipulating men who seem to enslave her. The fact that she works so much more than the men has seemed to put her in the position of a labourer, yet this very activity serves her ends.

Long ago, perhaps, when human beings lived solely by the chase, women were dependent on men for life itself. Later, however, women probably undertook the first agriculture practised, and by their industry were able not only to feed themselves, but to stave off hunger for the whole family when game was very scarce. Very gradually the positions were reversed, and men became dependent on women. Undeniably the African man is a child in the hands of his mother, his wife or other women. It is the woman who is the provider of comforts and the mainstay of the household. As such, and as the giver of life, she dominates the home ; through the home she rules the family, and in fine becomes the strength of the tribe. We do

wrong to deplore her lot as a worker, and any attempt to liberate her from the supposed burden of labour will inevitably destroy the hold she has over the men. "What would I do if I did not work?" a native woman asked; and she might well have said, "What would I be?" In her present position as a mother and worker she is respected, even venerated; converted into an imitation of the European model, her position would truly be that of a chattel. What is wanted is not that the men should work instead of the women, but that the men should work as much as their wives, and thus make possible the development of their women along with themselves in matters not strictly pertaining to manual labour. That either sex should be drones in the hive must militate against the advance of the other, and the best example the men may find will be the energy of their own women-folk.

It is not the intention of the writer to represent the African woman in any idealised light. The means to her hand have been few, and all in the nature of deceit, cunning or subterfuge; wherefore she has been warped morally to a greater extent than the men. Witchcraft, secret revenge, spite, jealousy and obstinacy are regrettably and peculiarly female sins in Africa, nor are these weaknesses unobserved by the men. Fear of what evil a woman may bring upon them by curses, and resort to magic, holds many a man who might otherwise attempt to escape a life of discord, or who might be tempted to stray from the path of husbandly duty.

The attribute of mysterious powers in woman is one of her strongest weapons and is manifested in the following belief. If a woman strikes anyone with her clothing, such person is doomed to die. Therefore a woman guards her property by touching each article with her leathern apron ; in this way such articles will cause the death of the one who steals them.

Notwithstanding the importance of the woman in the life of the family, and as the mysterious wielder of good or evil influence, she is in one sense kept in a position of inferiority. A woman may, for instance, have property, but she rarely has the control of it. With few exceptions she has no right of inheritance, nor can she sue or be sued in person, but only through some male relative. In fact, she is very much in the position of a minor for life. One result of this is that women have gained very little experience or knowledge of matters outside their household duties, and to a greater degree than is the case in Europe they are more conservative and ignorant than the men. Both by their greater numbers and their powerful influence they thus constitute an intellectual drag on the people as a whole, and for this reason attempts to uplift and enlighten the African should be commenced among the women first and foremost.

By educating or otherwise enlightening the men only we begin at the wrong end, and run the danger of still further widening the intellectual cleft between the sexes. Closely concerned therewith is another pronounced characteristic of the African woman, stubbornness, or tenacity.

Possessed of few definite privileges, and ever mindful that she belongs to what is esteemed the weaker sex, she is always prepared to insist on, and cleave to, what she considers her undoubted right. You may induce the African man to resign himself to many vicissitudes, but not so the African woman ; and not infrequently she will prefer to take her own life rather than to give way. Despite the back seat taken in non-domestic and public affairs within the tribe, the women often play unbelievably " heavy " rôles, more particularly in recent times, and the weight of their influence is the greater for being more or less of a secret nature.

While men are to a great degree amenable to ordered government they are unable to free themselves of the influence of the women. At the present day almost every political disturbance in Africa has its roots in some mischievous belief or supposed supernatural agency which may create despair or excite unruly passions. These beliefs in themselves have little hold on the men, but through their women, steeped in ignorance and superstition, and aroused thereby to a point of frenzy, the influence on the people as a whole is deplorable, though it must be confessed such disturbances are comparatively short-lived, the common sense of the men coming quickly to their rescue under Government investigation and correction.

An example of this may be cited. A disturbance was, not long ago, occasioned by the supposed presence of a mysterious spirit among the people. Few men were affected, but numbers of women were " possessed," and the medicine-men took

full advantage of their hysteria to foment the trouble. "No evil but a woman or a priest is behind it" is an old saying, which in Africa is an undeniable truth, if we dignify by the title of "priest" the hungry hordes of tricksters who disguise themselves as sorcerers, etc., and prey upon the vulnerability of the gentler sex. But here honours are even; it is the woman and priest working together, for women are the principal clients of the medicine-men and magicians, and these in turn are ever-ready agents for the women.

There are, however, not a few instances of women who have played a prominent and noble part in public affairs. Lowly as her place may be, woman is not entirely rejected as a ruler, and chieftainesses have often made a greater name for themselves than chiefs. Just as in Europe, where women who are still debarred from many professions may yet be monarchs of empires, so in Africa the woman who may not even plead her own cause has on occasion ruled whole tribes. The most influential and respected person in the district is the chief's mother, "the mother of the land," as she is called. Native history and legend give us many examples of heroic women who have played important parts in the succour of their country in time of need, and whose strength of character and fine *morale* speak volumes for the possibilities latent in the African woman.

When the country of Kilema was invaded by hostile tribes the chief, Kombo, migrated with all his people to Kirua, leaving his country in the hands of his enemies. Now Kombo had a very

beautiful wife, to whom Mosha, the Chief of Kirua, made love, not unbeknown to Kombo, who, however, was afraid to interfere lest he and his people be thrust out of the country in which they had found shelter. Then Kombo's wife secretly fled back to her native country, now filled with hostile warriors. When her people discovered her flight many followed her into their land, for she was greatly beloved, and they knew not why she had left the country of Chief Mosha. When they questioned her she declared that sooner than live in shame she would let herself and her son be murdered by the enemy. Hearing themselves thus derided the Kilema people now determined to stay and defend their land. It was not long before the enemy once more advanced upon them. Terror-stricken, Kombo hid himself, but his heroic wife, arming herself with his weapons, led the people against the enemy until Kombo was shamed into taking the command. And now the Kilema men fought with good heart, and soon put the enemy to flight. Thus was the country of Kilema saved.

In the district of Machame, the largest chiefship of Kilimanjaro, lives Nuya, the mother of Chief Shangali, the present ruler. A quiet, dignified woman, she is highly respected, and, while not appearing in public affairs, from behind the scenes she directs many a question of public interest. In earlier days her husband, Ndeseruo, had given protection and help to the then young Chief Sina of Kiboso, the neighbouring chiefship, but when Ndeseruo died, the ungrateful Sina fell upon the land to oppose his patron's son, Shangali. War

and disaster threatened the land, because in Machame there was no leader, Shangali being but a boy. In this crisis Nuya set out through the forest, accompanied only by one of her elders and a young girl leading a lamb, the sign of petition for peace. Undaunted she approached the hostile army, and demanded speech with Sina, and, having gained access to that bloodthirsty warrior, she exhorted him to remember the gratitude he owed her husband and to lay aside his arms. Sina, who never before had wavered in his war-like undertakings, was chastened and gave peace.

To-day old Nuya may be seen passing among the elders and youths of Machame, who silently step aside and watch her with loving attention and reverently bared heads. She is now a great-grandmother, and although short of stature, and somewhat stout, bears herself with queenly dignity and grace. Her few quiet words are listened to with rapt attention by her followers, and the flashing intelligence in her clear, brown eyes betokens a keen mind and youthful spirit. She is an object of veneration to her people, and the embodiment of the best that her sex can show in Africa.

In general, the best element of womanhood in Africa is represented by such as Nuya; quiet, retiring, respected whether as the mother of one or the "mother of the land"; patient, industrious and self-sacrificing, she rules unseen the destinies of her fellow-men, and her many fine qualities may well outweigh the shortcomings and limitations which nature, rather than her own default, has imposed upon her.

CHAPTER X

BIG AND LITTLE GAME

The African *Dudu*—One's First Centipede—The Ghoul—Battles with Bats—Tarantulas—Ticks and "Tickletoes"—Ants with an Appetite for Sunday Clothes—The Flyers—Snakes of the House and Garden—Killing a Python—Stalking Real Game—Friendly Giraffes—Lions at Breakfast—The Resurrection of the Dead—My First Ostrich—The Lure of Africa

THE pursuit of "big game" in Africa, one of life's greatest sports, is looked forward to eagerly by all Europeans as a crowning achievement in the way of adventure, so the writer feels that no personal account of life on the Equator would be complete without a modest allusion to her own experiences with the wild beasts of Africa.

Giving due consideration to the fact that opinions vary as to what constitutes a savage animal, I can but set down my various encounters with such as I was privileged to meet, hoping that my friends will not pass judgment thereby on my prowess as a "mighty huntress."

To the average woman, whose men-folk have never indulged in sport outside the limits of a grouse-moor or pheasant-covert, the words "African Bush" conjure up visions of lions on one's doorstep, leopards in the rose bushes and elephants lifting the roof off one's house. Thus have we been prepared by the illustrations in our "Infant Geographies." But of the hundred and

one terrifying pests of diminutive size, or no size at all, which infest all tropical countries, one will in all probability have heard little or nothing. On the subject of these the white men of Africa are wisely silent. Yet one is of the opinion, after a closer acquaintance with the country, that it is not the fear of her wild beasts which strikes terror to the heart of women visitors, but the continued presence of the African *dudu*, a gentle and generously applied name for all insect pests, whose numbers and irritating qualities at first horrify, but in a few months (one is assured) become a source of amusement, generally speaking, to the hardened male.

During our first repast on land in Tanga, after witnessing the plunge bath into the soup of a few dozen flying ants, and having no further interest in my plate, my attention fell upon a new acquaintance, some six inches long, his horny brown back concealing many legs which were bearing him rapidly towards my feet. A warning cry from the small serving-boy, as he snatched up the carving-knife, caused me to mount my chair, and from this vantage-point to witness my small, brown visitor departing in three different directions, seemingly unannoyed by his division and multiplication. Thus one's first centipede! With the dessert appeared a curious-looking fellow, peering over the edge of the table. In fairyland he might have passed for an emaciated gnome. His legs were grasshoppery, and he was seemingly innocent of evil design, but his eyes were ghoulish, and far too large for his tiny head, so, after enduring his

menacing stare for several minutes, I thought to remove myself from the vicinity of that unpleasant face without attracting further notice. My intended departure was, however, anticipated by my bold-eyed *vis-à-vis*, who sprang upon me fiercely. Undismayed by the piercing shriek which greeted his arrival, he remained on my bare arm, wagging his head and eyeing me coldly until plucked off by friendly hands. The unwelcome guest was then introduced as the African "Praying God," or *Amantis*, whose attack was explained as mere curiosity and interest in a newly arrived European.

These unpleasant fellows one has intimate acquaintance with throughout the year in Africa, though they are most prevalent before and after the rains, when a dozen or more, varying in size from two to six inches, may suddenly appear on your dinner-table, and when they have sufficiently embarrassed you by their threatening stare they dart into your eyes or hair, or settle on your bare shoulders, and occasionally strike with their tiny mandibles. They are not considered poisonous to humans, although they kill insects with a thrust of this needle-like weapon; but the suddenness with which they alight on one, and their impertinent, sinister expression cause discomfiture, if nothing more.

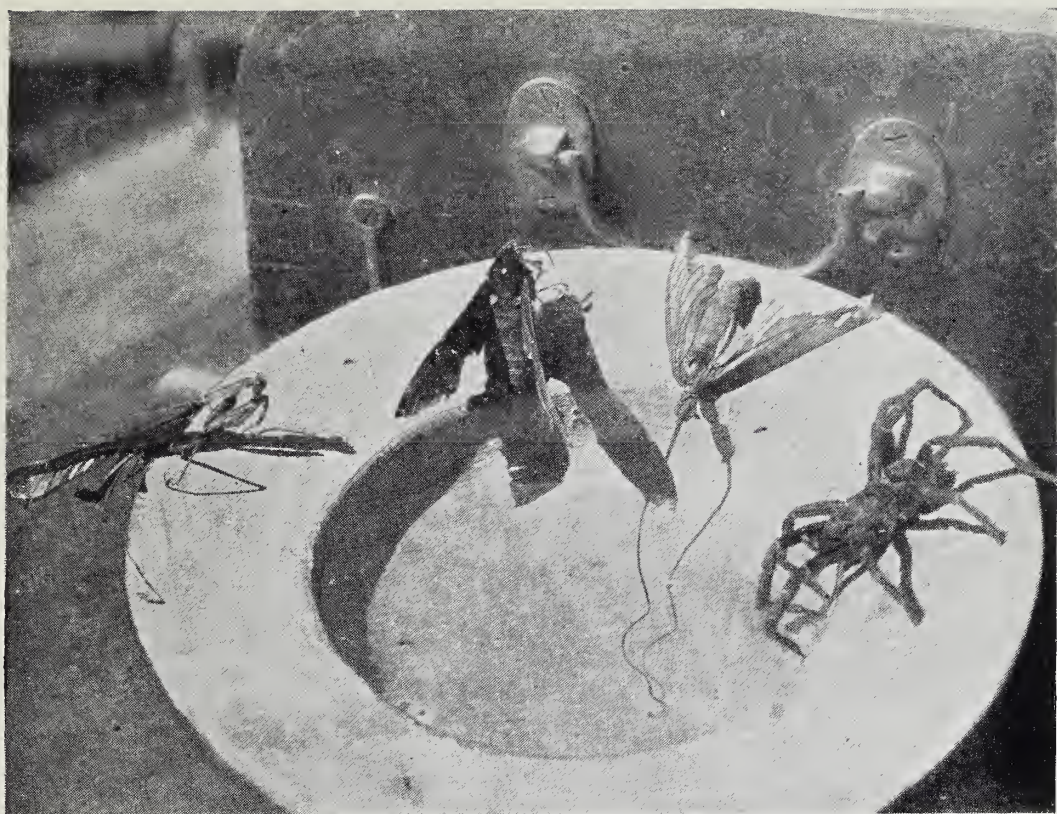
One grows accustomed to sitting on one's verandah and watching the antics of the various-hued lizards running up and down the walls, and, after a time, can successfully "register" only startled amusement when an over-ambitious ceiling-walker loses his hold and plumps suddenly

head-foremost into one's lap. Scarlet-tailed wasps hover above the bed awaiting the arrival of early tea, and settle at once on the sugar-bowl, which is best placed at a safe distance from one's pillow, as the faintest odour of "sunburn cream" on an afflicted nose will promptly bring half-a-dozen darting wasps about one's face.

The mosquito-net frame surrounding the bed is a favoured residence for every variety of wasp and bee, and from here and the cornice of your wardrobe and the keyboard of your piano they must constantly be ousted from the single-cell nests, which they patiently rebuild again in the self-same spot.

Boring beetles vie with them in the selection of home-sites, and these great clumsy fellows, roaring like an ancient Ford car, dash heavily into your face or entangle themselves in your hair and clothing, and can give a nasty pinch if approached from the wrong end. At night the mosquito-frame, ceilings and doorways are festooned with bats, large and small, and only the sheltering net protects the sleeper from these loathsome "fly-by-nights," as all windows and doors must of necessity remain open to afford sufficient air, whatever the weather.

A daily sport was the ousting of bats from the *Bwana's* dressing-room before he could change for dinner, for as lamps and candles must be kept alight at as short an interval as possible in the heated indoor atmosphere, the early twilight brings the insect-lodgers to their favourite quarters in the darkened rooms. It was therefore a matter of pride to successfully enter the dressing-room before any



(Upper) THE EVENING SOUP

(Lower) THE *AMANTIS* ("PRAYING GOD")

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of the hanging visitors could escape, and the introduction of a light into their sanctuary brought them quickly to life and sent them flying blindly in all directions.

I confess to a strong aversion to bats—almost the only one that Africa has not cured—as the memory still exists of childish curls being sacrificed to the family shears because a bat had chosen to entangle himself in my hair. Hence the nightly bat contests were “witnessed” by the writer through the stout thickness of the door, from which point of safety she could cheer lustily as each resounding whack announced another victim to the tennis racket, and hearty congratulations were always in order to the hero of the hour.

Any dark corner where ancient raincoats may be hung offers cover for the big black tarantulas, which move with incredible swiftness, and attack with deadly aim whatever blocks their progress. One dark night of pulsing heat, when retiring within doors was delayed till the last minutes before midnight, and all doors save one had been locked inside by the house-boys, I looked up from the book I was reading to find an unusually large tarantula moving rapidly toward me from a distance of six feet down the verandah. As escape indoors was impossible, and the tarantula barred the way to the verandah steps, there was nothing to do but cast the book at the advancing enemy. It missed, of course, and the tarantula ran under the chair in which I was sitting. To retire from the field without further attempts to dispatch the hairy-legged creature simply postponed the evil

moment when he would again appear, possibly on one's bed. Hence the family boot-scraper was requisitioned for the next attack, and the end was complete and painless for the attacker.

Somewhat shaken by this first encounter alone with one of Africa's most terrifying *dudus*, I decided to face the heat indoors, and hence made for the far end of the verandah, where the door of the bedroom was unlocked. Half-way down the long passage, which was partly in shadow, a dark patch showed on the rug. Instinct said "Look out," and gingerly approaching the spot which lay in my path, suddenly another hairy black body shot toward my feet, and with a most unlady-like yell I leapt over it to seize a native spear from the wall, then another and another, until the house re-echoed with the clanging steel. In this instance I did not wait to see the end, but ran precipitately for the open door. Here again some eighth sense gave me warning, and I stopped just in time to prevent my skirts from sweeping the third tarantula off the door-casing. This was indeed too much for jangled nerves, and I called lustily for assistance. As the head of the family was a week's journey distant on the mountain, the safety of the household was entrusted to a native *askari* (police), who occupied a tent near by, and was at this hour snoring loudly in his retreat. Several minutes elapsed before the alarm penetrated his befogged intelligence, and when he appeared he was without shoes or puttees. The tarantula was pointed out to him, and with a shrug of his shoulders he lifted one huge, bare foot to scrape the beastie off the door. At my warning

cry he desisted, and good-naturedly consented to use a stick instead.

Examining one's shoes for stray tarantulas is a daily duty, for boots, slippers and all foot-wear are favourite retreats of these unpleasant creatures—in fact nothing in the way of clothing or foot-covering is ever worn without first being thoroughly shaken or brushed, and one learns never to thrust one's hand into a dark corner or receptacle without first exploring it with a long-handled stick or umbrella.

Scorpions one finds more frequently out-of-doors, and usually lurking in the vines or flowers; hence one reluctantly finds that even the flowers may not be touched indiscriminately. In fact it is wiser to *look* at all things in Africa rather than to handle them, for if no visible creature is there to menace one there are countless varieties of germs attaching themselves to all objects which are handled by natives, and many of the most annoying of insects are seemingly invisible to the naked eye.

The "jigger" flea, no larger than a speck of dust, is probably responsible for more cases of blood-poisoning than any other creature in Africa. Everywhere in dry weather they infest the houses and roads, to leap into one's shoes and burrow beneath the toe-nails, whence they must at once be dug out with sharp needles and the tiny wound disinfected. Only a slight tickling sensation makes their presence known, but if not removed immediately the little speck burrows into the flesh and produces a sack of eggs which in time bursts and becomes septic. Native boys who walk about the public paths every day are seldom seen without

a toe or two bound up in cotton rags, which usually means infection from jiggers, and the great pastime of every native, when not otherwise engaged, is seeking for jiggers in his foot. Even the assembly of grave elders seated before us on *safari* usually included several members who divided attention between affairs of state and a tickling toe which demanded treatment. Among Europeans the delicate task of removing these tiny creatures from one's foot is usually relegated to the most adept of one's house-boys, and in dry weather the performance is almost a daily one. Sometimes five or six of these all-but-invisible borers will have embedded themselves in one's flesh before breakfast, and to step from one's bath without first donning well-shaken slippers is certain to result in this minor affliction.

The value of human flesh as a breeding-place for insect larvæ is known to other insects as well as the "jigger." One of the most trying experiences of this kind comes to Europeans and natives alike through the activity of the maggot-fly, in this case depositing an invisible egg upon clothing or bedding dried in the air, and which, when brought in contact with one's body, bores with a tiny spiral beneath the skin of back or shoulders and there deposits itself. This develops with the heat of the body and becomes most painful, sometimes attaining the size of a large almond, and when removed leaving an ugly opening which may easily become septic. Indeed, one of the greatest menaces to health in tropical countries comes from the ever-present possibility of blood-poisoning from the

least important wound. The native hospitals are filled with patients suffering from the results of some neglected scratch or cut.

The slightest incision of a rose-thorn may show signs of septicæmia in a few hours, and only clothing which is pressed with hot irons immediately before coming in contact with the body can be safely considered free of lurking germs of one sort or another.

Besides these creatures who seek a home for their young in the body of humans there are many varieties of ants which infest the pathways and are content only to inflict a few sharp nips on the ankle of the passer-by. Of these, the small black species called *Siafu* are perhaps the most venomous, as the sting of their bite remains for several days, and, attacking in numbers, they have been known to cause the death of dogs and even humans. As they ordinarily travel in bands of many thousands and cross the trail in close formation, they can usually be avoided by the pedestrian. On *safari* one often hears the warning cry *siafu* from the porters ahead, and one walks warily thereafter until the ant-mass is met and safely stepped over. The *siafu* have a perfect organisation for safeguarding the workers of the army: outposts and scouts keep the path clear on all sides, darting here, there and everywhere while the mob of burden-bearers, protected by a rampart of guards forming a covered bridge with their raised mandibles, travels unmolested beneath. A stick thrust into their midst causes instant confusion and anger. The scouts lift their long mandibles and strike at any impediment to the progress of their forces, and it is some

time before the frightened workers can again be marshalled into a compact mass. This variety of ant is extremely carnivorous, and a dog who is unfortunate enough to land among them will often be instantly covered by thousands, who feast upon the poor creature until he dies. Our own house-dog was once attacked in this manner at night in camp, and rushed howling into the tent of his master, leaping on the bed and scattering the venomous little ants right and left. Nothing remained but to break camp in a pouring rain and move elsewhere. As we could do nothing to rid Tino of his assailants, the poor little dog disappeared, never to be seen again.

The large black ant, commonly called the "soldier," is even better disciplined, as the ranks of these workers travel in set lines, four or five abreast, protected by the stalwart majors and captains, who keep step beside them and whose orders are implicitly obeyed. These large black ants give a particularly vicious bite to any human foot or ankle within reach.

A species less annoying to one's person, but none the less a curse to Africa, is the white ant, which destroys everything in the nature of wood in an incredibly short time, whole buildings having been wrecked in a few years by inroads upon framework and walls. Only the best quality of plaster and the *m'vuli* wood can withstand this onslaught, and as many houses are built from composite mud and plaster, such are certain to be infested by white ants and become utterly useless for living purposes. Our little house, which was well above the ground,

and seemed stoutly built of hard wood and stone, gave forth an ominous crack one day, and hurrying to the scene I found a whole window-frame had dropped out, and from the broken walls were pouring forth millions of newly hatched white ants, forming an impenetrable black cloud as they flew away to freedom and more mischief. These had bored into the camouflaged mud wall between the stones and bred in countless numbers, destroying and loosening the wood and honeycombing the entire wall surface. A few hours after hatching the wings drop off and the insect settles in some other building to restart the process of breeding.

It is not unusual after heavy rain to see great black clouds of these pests arising from the ground and flying short distances to seek new abodes, and everywhere through uninhabited bush and plain are seen their conical red mounds towering above man's height. Veritable castles they are, honeycombed with cleverly constructed passages and ante-rooms which lead to the apartments of the queen.

A most amazing creature is this giant female of the species, and the chief mischief-maker, as it is she who fructifies the earth with millions of offspring. About five or six inches long, snow-white, and resembling an immense caterpillar, but with smooth, unpleasant skin, she is not good to look upon. Wherever evidence points to the presence of those insects the first step is to seek out and destroy their queen, for without her the builders and destroyers usually desert their cells. Their destructive ability is not confined to houses, however, as any-

thing in the nature of cloth is quickly set upon and wholly eaten if left in their vicinity for even a few days. One of the ladies in our station, a most truthful person, related to me the following tale, which is undoubtedly true, and was told with genuine tears of distress in her kind eyes. "Our house, which you know is built of mud-plaster, has been filled with ants for years, but the meanest trick they have ever played me was to eat my Sunday blouse. I had hung it in the cupboard to wear for baby's christening. It was a very nice georgette blouse from "Spooks" in Cape Town, and had their name on the collar band, and would you believe it, Mrs ——, when I went to get it this morning there was nothing left but the name-band hanging on the hook!" That there was anything humorous in this recital never occurred to the narrator, and one had not the heart to laugh. For to lose one's Sunday blouse in Africa is a tragedy of no mean proportions, since it requires three months to place an order and receive a fresh one from "home."

The true flying ant is one to two inches in length, and these appear in hundreds on one's verandah immediately preceding and following the rainy seasons, often making the evening meal an impossibility, as they cluster on lamp-shades and swarm over food, water-glasses and soup-plates. We devised a method of disposing of a large number by placing a lighted lamp in a rubber bath half-filled with water. Where they were most numerous the result was several hundred corpses floating on the surface, affording infinite recreation and amuse-

ment to the puppy and kittens, who thoroughly enjoy the feast they provide. Natives have been known to fry these ants as a table delicacy not unlike our European whitebait. The cracking of dozens of these soft-shelled insects under foot is not a pleasant sound for fastidious ears, and despite the presence of the plunge-bath of death on the verandah floor, whole evenings of extreme heat are made more irritating by constant necessity of plucking these persistent ants from one's hair, face and clothing.

The periods preceding or following the rains are always marked by an influx of all sorts of annoying insects and creatures, large and small. There are nights when conversation is well-nigh impossible because of croaking frogs in the water-furrow which surrounds the house. When they become unbearable the guests form a brigade of extermination. Armed with native spears or sharp sticks, they take up strategic positions at intervals along the furrow, and each betraying croak is followed by a spludge and grunt as the raucous vocalist joins the "choirs above."

Aside from the hordes of comparatively harmless pests in Africa, there are countless venomous creatures from the menace of which life is never free. The most perfect of moonlit nights, when the scent of roses calls from the garden, and all nature lures one to go forth and drink in the beauties of earth and sky, must be ignored if one is unwilling to face the dangers lurking in every shadow. Snakes of every description creep from their holes at night, scorpions, centipedes and tarantulas infest

the paths, wild dogs and jackals can be heard not far distant, and water-buck can be seen in numbers moving warily about the garden, feasting on one's precious verbenas and zinnias. These beasts are not dangerous in themselves (unless pursued or startled, when they may turn to charge the inquisitive property-owner), but their presence is an invitation to hungry lions and leopards, who stalk their prey the night through.

House-snakes are numerous, many of them deadly. Coming late into my bedroom one evening and being laughed at for feeling that "something was there," I shortly espied a small black heap in the doorway, and on quietly announcing my find to the ridiculer, was promptly sent from the room while he dispatched the black heap, a young *mamba*, the most poisonous of all snakes, and from whose bite one is popularly supposed to die within three minutes.

Another day I was hastily summoned by my house-boy, who was arranging the beds, to see a tree-snake, some five feet in length, snugly dozing beneath the bed; and on another occasion the entire household staff appeared trembling with fear because the garden-boy announced the presence of a *dudu m'kubwa* (great insect) in the tool-house. For this affair I organised the servants who were willing to support me, and we filed out to the tool-house to examine the premises. My own house-boy and his mate having disappeared under a bed indoors, 'Pishi (the cook), cook's-boy, our faithful *toto* and myself were left to discover the marauder. 'Pishi, armed with a long, forked stick,

was first to enter the little tin house, and immediately leapt out with a great yell of terror. Laughed at by the *toto* and myself, he wrapped his cloth tightly about his body and again essayed an entrance, but my warning shout brought him quickly outside the building, as a great python could now be seen from the doorway peacefully at rest beneath the watering-cans. I advised slaughter from a vantage-point without. Prodding him with 'Pishi's stick, from a distance of ten feet, soon brought the great creature to life, but he moved sluggishly, and in a few seconds the black cook had him fast on his sharp, stout stick. When we brought him into the daylight, impaled but alive, and darting a long, forked tongue angrily at us and doubling back on his length to strike this way and that, we succeeded in pinning him to earth, and found he measured fourteen feet two inches—no small *dudu* to be stepped on in the dark of the tool-house!

A nurse in one of our large coast hospitals once told me she had gone in the moonlight a few steps from the door to enjoy the cool air and rest for a moment on a stone garden seat. She was scarcely settled when an enormous head reared itself above an adjacent rose-bush, seeming to grow taller and taller as she gazed fascinated at the blurred outline. Then with a knowing shriek she leapt backward over the seat and fled. The following morning a twelve-foot python was found in an outhouse. The master of our own household has often had venomous snakes sharing his camp tent, but wisely kept a supply of boots at hand, and these held the

226 BENEATH AFRICAN GLACIERS

intruder's attention until more deadly weapons were available.

The most loathsome of domesticated *dudus* is, to my mind, the millipede, a shiny, worm-like creature, six to ten inches in length, which evinces a partiality for the mosquito-net enclosing one's bed, and unless discovered in daylight may cross one's face in the night, leaving a disagreeable gummy trail, not, however, poisonous, as is that of the centipede.

One might go on *ad infinitum* with tales of the African *dudu*, but as he is an accepted phase of African life, a pest which must be borne silently if one would escape the ridicule of the sterner sex, one learns to endure his presence without flinching. We are still of opinion, however, that to the average woman he is more terrifying and provocative of discomfort than all the savage creatures of great size who haunt the forest and plain. With these there is the primitive lust of battle on more or less equal grounds, for anyone with a steady eye and a good gun has less to fear from a man-sized beast, who can be tracked and seen, than from the invisible carriers of every sort of poison who hide themselves in your boots, clothing, closets and beds.

To the woman who is seeing wild game in its natural habitat for the first time, and who has never before tasted the joys of using a "256" rifle, the days on Kilimanjaro's pathless plains are a treasury of thrilling events.

The silver-coated zebra, just discernible in the distance, standing like a patient donkey beneath a shady tree at noon-time, is as great a lure to the

novice as the rarer beasts to the seasoned hunter, and there is as wild an adventure in stalking this wary little striped pony as the small boy feels in snaring the neighbourhood's black cat. Yet the getting within range of these attractive beasts presents many difficulties to the untrained hunter. The long, wiry grass, which forms the grazing ground of the herds, affords unpleasant and insecure footing. Bumps and hollows lie concealed everywhere beneath the thick roots, and the few leafless thorn-trees dotting the upland plains give small cover, hence one must creep on hands and knees, or worm-like on one's stomach, until within possible shooting distance. This, under a burning tropical sun with the thermometer registering some 110° Fahrenheit, taxes the endurance of even a hardened Anglo-African, and more often than not the labour is in vain, as the faintest scent of man, borne on the most delicate of breezes, will startle the herd into activity, and one sees the coveted prize disappearing in a wild gallop over a ridge five hundred yards distant.

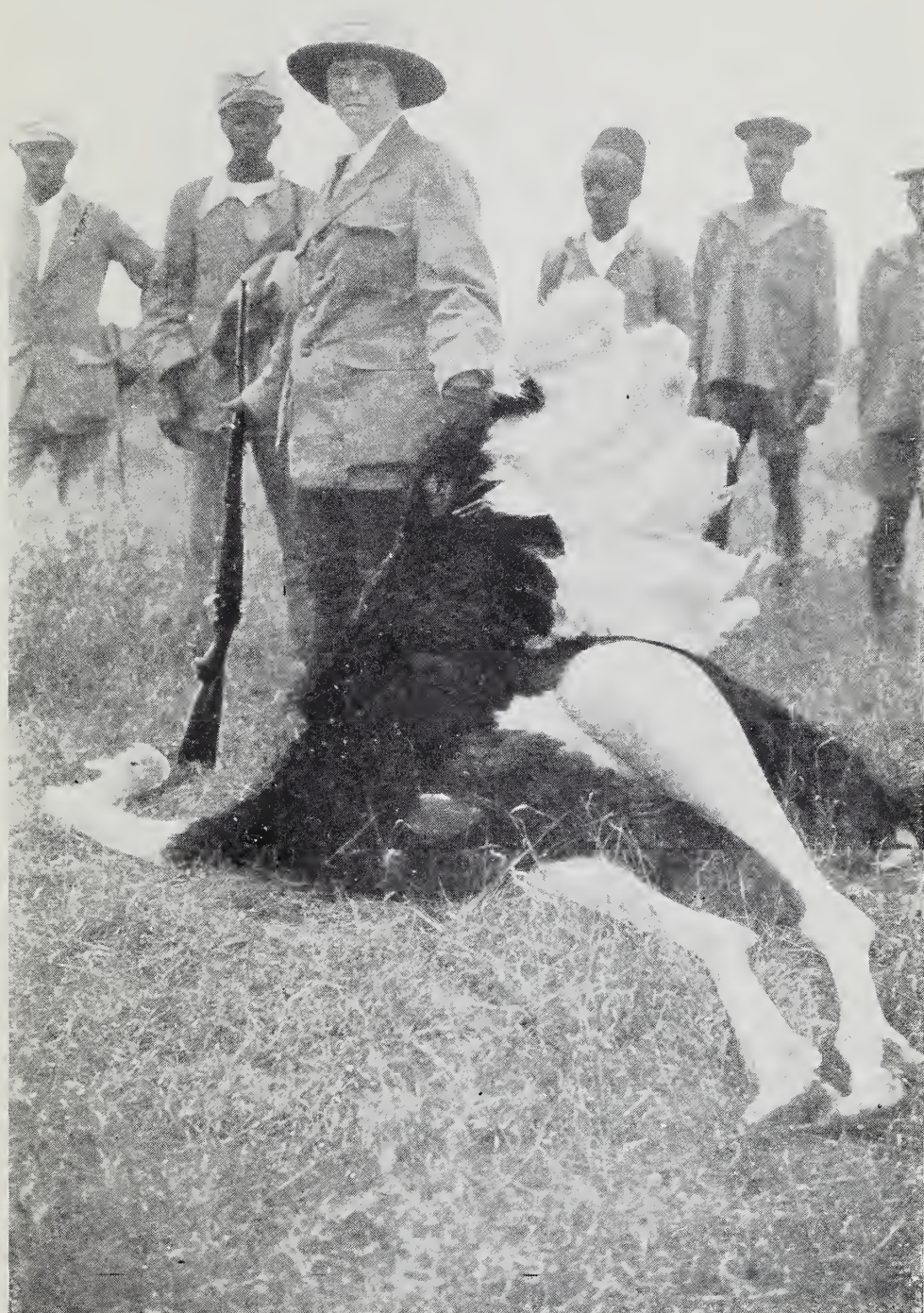
To be the unofficial member of an official party bent on serious affairs of state has its drawbacks. One cannot wander so far afield as to interrupt the official progress along the route of business. Only when conscientious scruples can be sacrificed to a very real need of meat for the porters is one permitted to leave the route chosen and delay the march for a pot-shot at game seen in the distance. Many a sigh of longing is wasted on the official ears, and one must adapt oneself to the stern *safari* rules and find pleasure in gazing at the game,

which may not be pursued without incurring official displeasure.

A sunset walk, after settling into camp at the end of a five hours' tramp, brought us one evening within hailing distance of three enormous giraffes, their gold-mottled necks stretched to unbelievable length as they reached for a cluster of fresh, green leaves in the topmost branches of a tree. Unfortunately both camera and gun had been left behind, and the queer-looking beasties seemed to be aware of this fact, as they allowed us to gaze on their beauty with supreme indifference. Only when we were within seventy yards of them did they deign to move on at a leisurely pace.

These splendid animals are now protected by the game laws of Africa, as they serve no purpose when slaughtered, save for their tough hide, and were formerly so ruthlessly shot for mere sport that their complete extermination was threatened. Nature herself has done much to protect them, as they are chiefly found on grassy upland plains, covered with a sparse growth of fantastic thorn-trees, whose gaunt, elongated upper branches strangely resemble the long neck and sloping back of the awkward giraffe. Coming suddenly on one of these open, tree-dotted stretches, one is often elated by the apparent quantity of game, and slow to believe that only the empty, laughing landscape lies before one.

It was just after one of these great "discoveries," which proved a hollow delusion, that I saw my first wild ostrich, scarcely discernible from the feathery thorn-bush which surrounded him, and



THE BALLET DANCER LAID LOW

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standing so quietly that one hesitated to express belief in his existence. But by surreptitiously taking the gun from my bearer and stealing away unobserved from the long line of porters, headed by the *Bwana*, I came by stages of dropping and stalking to within three hundred yards of the black beauty, who by that time had begun to move sedately, showing his great plumed wings and glossy body. As he broke into a run, a well-directed shot caught him, and he dropped to my hand, my first African prize! A fine fellow he was too, with wing feathers some thirty inches in length. On closer acquaintance I did not fancy his glassy stare, and his upraised leg, quite bare of feathers, resembled nothing so much as the kicking member of an ancient lady of the "Pony Ballet" in white tights. I confess to being rather shaky as I leaned over him to lift the giant weight of wings, but he was truly dead, and well worth the expensive special licence which gave one the right of possession.

The day following this bit of good luck brought another surprise, not altogether pleasing in its initial instance. Having made an early start, over almost trackless grass plains, studded only with scattered dwarf thorn-trees, affording little shelter, we stopped for breakfast at the foot of a hill, covered with elephant grass the height of one's shoulder. Porters laid down their burdens, the three *askaris* unbuckled their service rifles and placed them at rest, while all gave themselves up to a few minutes' "stretch" until the white man's breakfast should be finished. Our guide, a very old

and wizened native, had gone on to scout for the path ahead, which was unknown to us, and not previously travelled by any white man. Suddenly the old fellow reappeared, greatly excited, and called the *Bwana* from his bacon and eggs to see a cloud of vultures hovering above the bush a half-mile or so distant. Without stopping to make explanation, the two started away, followed by the gun-bearer and two of our three *askaris*. Unable to understand the buzz of many dialects going on about me, I seated myself with a book, as much as possible in the shade of the tall grass, and prepared to await developments. A sudden shout from the one *askari* remaining, and a vision of many flying black legs, brought me to my feet. The native porters were either fleeing for a sheltering tree or digging themselves into the tall grass, and one "trusty," the son of a chief, who had volunteered his services as general guide and bureau of information, was climbing with lightning rapidity to the topmost branches of a ridiculous little thorn-tree.

Nothing was to be seen, but from the general hubbub of cries and warnings I made out the word *simba* (lion), and searching the high grass before me I saw, not a hundred yards distant, the long black mane and tawny body of a large male lion, apparently making his leisurely way to join my breakfast-party. He had evidently not heard the outcry of the natives, for he seemed quite unaware of our presence. The *askari* raised his service rifle, the only gun we possessed at the moment, and was about to shoot, when I called sharply to him to stop, as it suddenly occurred to

me that this beast was in all probability the one my husband had gone in search of, and the chances were that he and his party were close behind in the tall grass waiting to get a perfect shot. Fortunately for us at my shout the lion stopped and, turning, moved rapidly away from us, disappearing in the distant bush. Regret for a golden opportunity lost was not lessened when the scouting party returned with the guns to say they had seen two great lions feasting on carrion, but not within shooting distance, and on nearer approach both had disappeared, one making for the spot where we were breakfasting, and the *Bwana* had hastened back fearing for the safety of those who were dependent on the untried skill of a native *askari* and his "show" gun.

The rest of the day was filled with vain regrets for what might have been. One comforted oneself by thinking that a single-handed combat with a black-maned lion would possibly have given us an undue sense of importance, and there was consolation in the thought that if we had missed a vital part with a shot at such close range we might never have been able to talk of it.

Every watercourse crossed during the ensuing three days was marked by dozens of footprints, the spoor of lion and leopard, and the ominous crackling of a twig by the roadside (which was but the path worn by animals on their journey to and from the water-holes) was a sign for alertness on the part of everyone.

The second day in this wild grass country we walked in the shadow of high, bare hills for a time,

and from the top of the ridge, so long as they were within our vision, three motionless figures watched our progress. Splendid giraffes they were, although too far distant for us to discern their colouring. On another ridge, silhouetted against the sky, could be seen a herd of buffalo grazing, but too far from our course to admit of a *détour*. As we rounded the mountain toward the Masai plain herds of eland, kongoni and wildebeest were to be seen, but here luck failed us. We shot several with our precious "256," but they refused to remain dead, and as we turned to announce our great feat to those who had generously dropped behind, the "dead" came to life and ran away with the herd. Only too late did we discover we were using too small a gun and at too great a distance for any but a *skilled* hunter to reach a vital spot.

However, there was untold joy in seeing the beasts of geography fame, and one's pleasure and anticipation only increased with each day's march. At night great fires were kept burning, and guards were stationed about the camp, so that no surprise visits should be paid by silken-coated thieves. It was all very pleasant and exhilarating, even the persistent ticks in our clothing were passed over as a minor visitation, and we became quite callous to the need of disrobing immediately on reaching camp and having our clothing examined with minutest care by the boys, who usually bring the corpses of all insects discovered to prove the thoroughness of their search. Filled with ticks, bitten by fleas, "bored" by jiggers and peeled by the sun, it was yet with genuine regret that we left

the high uninhabited plains of the mountain and gazed back yearningly at the last herd of kongoni galloping away in the distance. Something more of beauty there was, too, in this wild, untouched handiwork of nature than in the gentle landscape we now entered, with its cultivated coffee fields and banana groves. The geography picture still lingered, and there was satisfaction at least in seeing it realised, in having our little "try" at shooting big game, and in tasting the pleasant and unpleasant of African bush life as it is.

Despite the minor discomforts, despite the insects, the illnesses, the heat, the necessary steeling of one's nerves to bear and forbear, one looks back on the sights and sounds of Africa with infinite longing, and dwells on her remembered charm as on a poignantly sweet and fleeting dream.

Here, in our quiet English countryside, where we may touch the grass, fill our arms with flowers of field and garden, and wander at will between high hedgerows along country lanes, with fear of naught save honking motors, our African life seems very remote. Yet with all its freedom from menace to life and health, its gentle beauty, its cherished friendships and varied interests, one's life in this tight little island loses some of its old-time flavour by the vivid, insistent memories of that other land—the child of Britain, yet so primitive, so enticing, so ruthless.

One knows one's own country, its history, the habits of its people, the look and feel of all that has been a part of one's life and the life of one's forbears, and one has learned to take it all very much

for granted. It is only after long absences that its real beauty and meaning are made clear to one, and yet the returned traveller, and more particularly, perhaps, the Anglo-African traveller, feels less and less a part of it all, save as his affection for it returns fourfold with each visit. Somewhere in those torrid lands on the Equator there is a stronger pull on his affections. Somewhere there is a race of many millions whose colour is not as ours but whose hearts and hands are reaching out telling us they have need of our thought and interest, and beseeching that we come back to them with that poor all, which we rate of little worth, but which, rightly used in their behalf, to them means freedom, emancipation from the toils of ignorance and superstition.

How many centuries must pass before they stand as freed men before us, no one can judge. But the key to their future is placed in the hands of every white man or woman who lives in their midst, and touches with understanding and sympathy even so much as the fringe of their poor lives. If each uses his key to open the door for the few with whom he comes in contact, and brings the eyes, ears and intelligence of the more enlightened to see what lies behind that door, the African native may not have trusted us in vain.

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